MIDSEASON REPORT

Sports Illustrated

YOUNG GUNS OF THE NFL

DREW BREES • MICHAEL VICK • DAVID CARR • TOM BRADY

THE BEST CROP OF QBs IN 20 YEARS

"I *KNOW* I CAN PLAY IN THIS LEAGUE"

—DETROIT ROOKIE

JOEY HARRINGTON

NOVEMBER 11, 2002 www.cnnsi.com | AOL Keyword: Sports Illustrated

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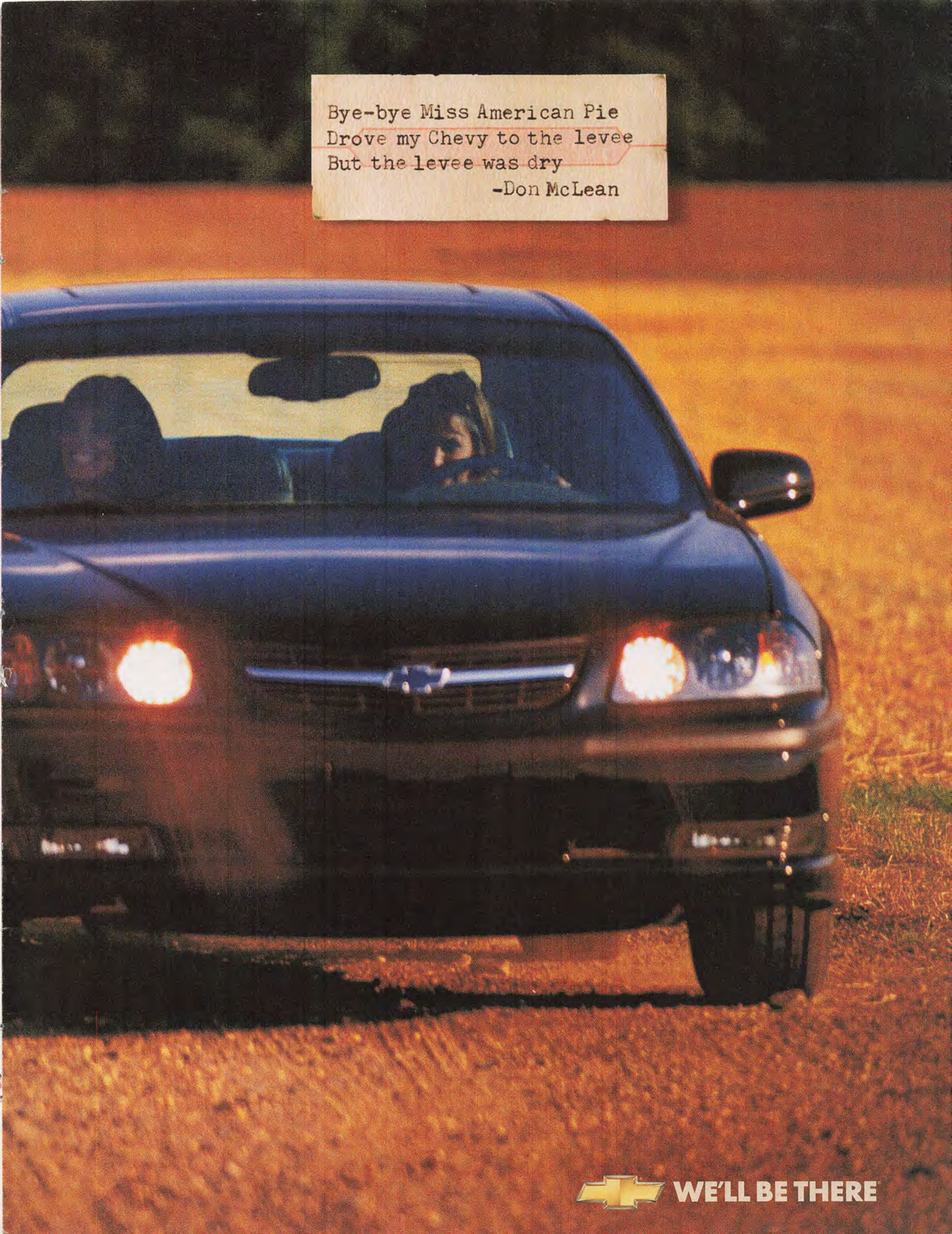
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But the levee was dry
-Don McLean
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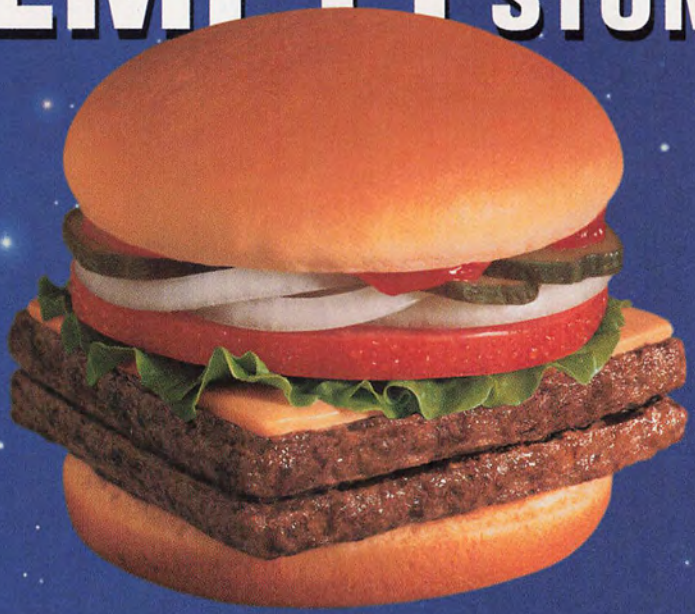

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November 11, 2002
VOLUME 97, NO. 19

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PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMON BRUTY

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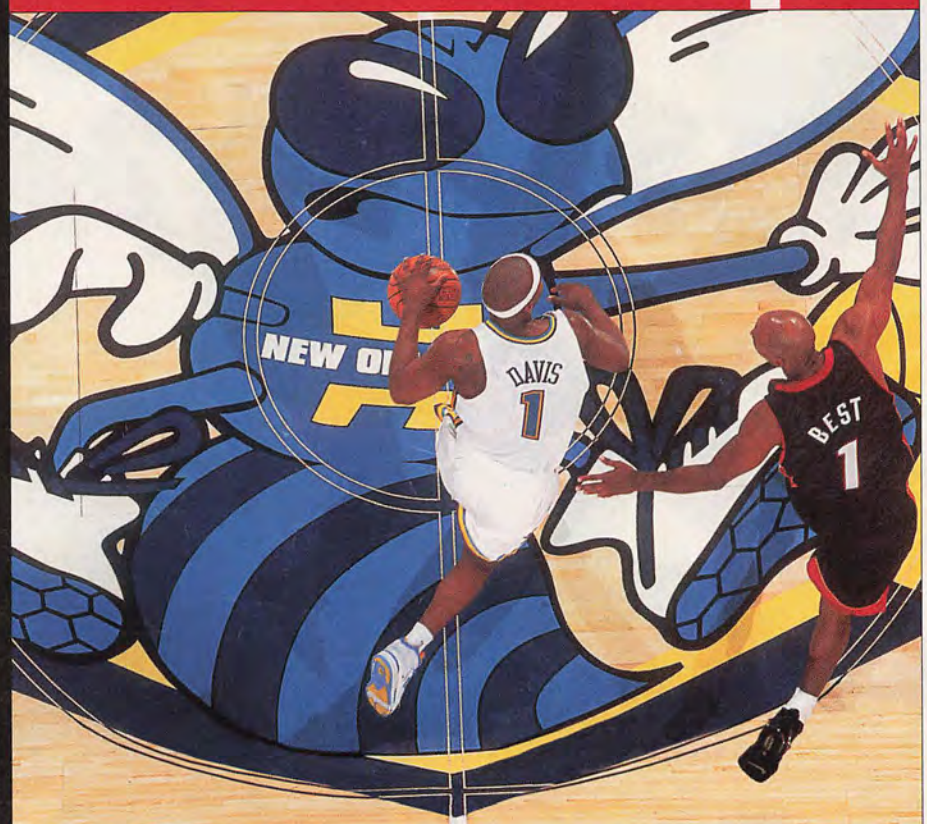

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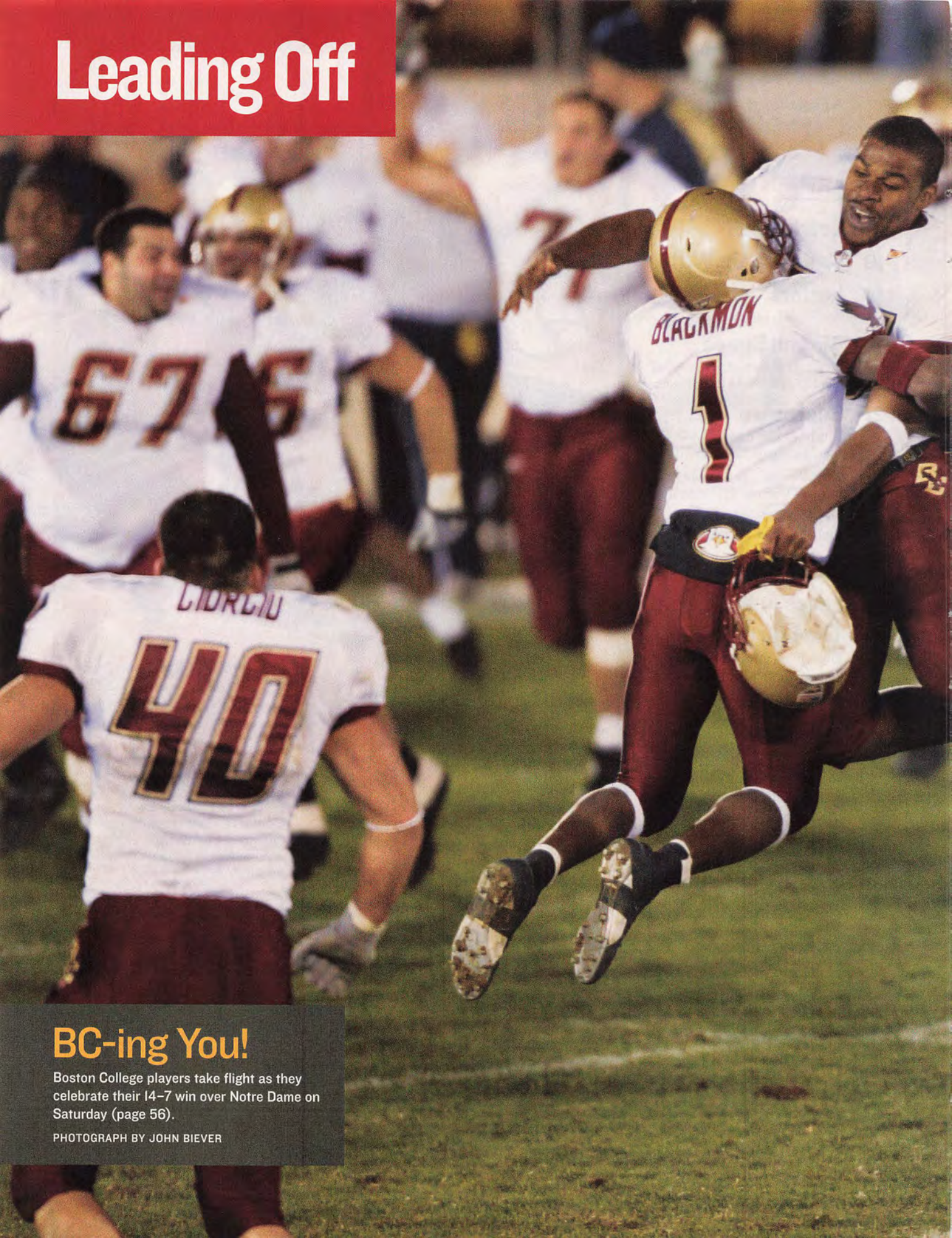
Leading Off



BC-ing You!

Boston College players take flight as they celebrate their 14–7 win over Notre Dame on Saturday (page 56).

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN BIEVER

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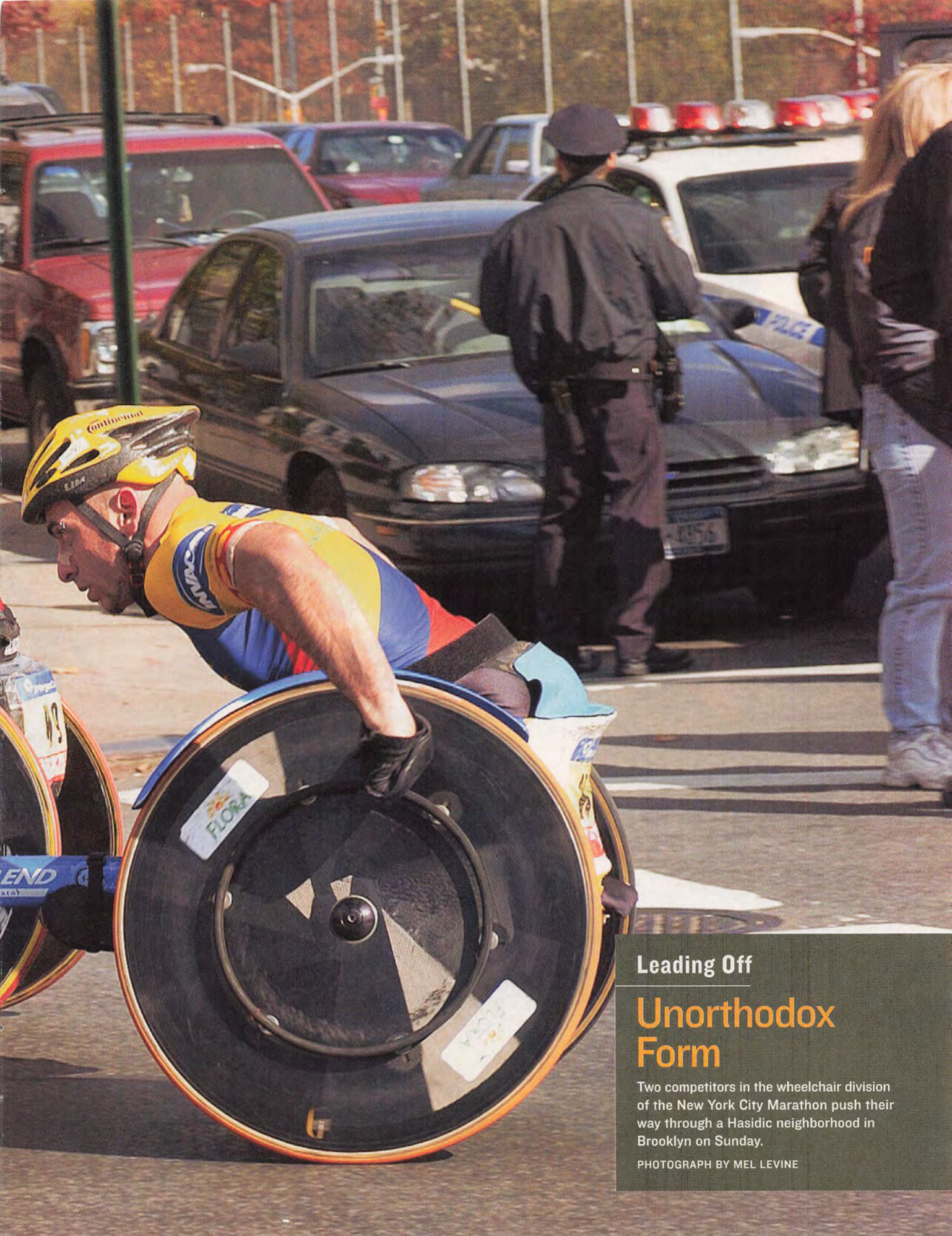
VICKIE
INVACARE
ELORA
SPORTAID

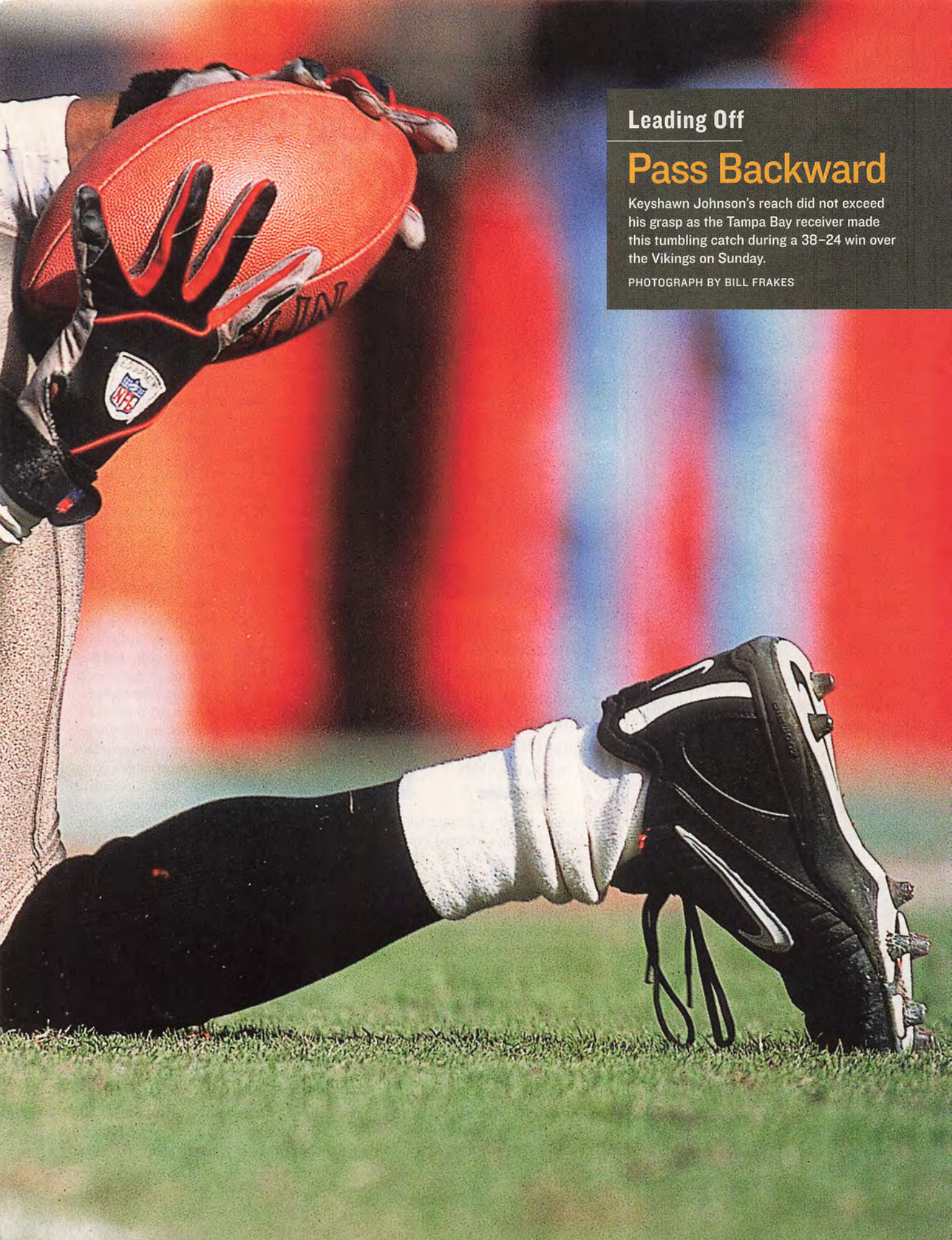


Leading Off

Unorthodox Form

Two competitors in the wheelchair division of the New York City Marathon push their way through a Hasidic neighborhood in Brooklyn on Sunday.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MEL LEVINE



Leading Off

Pass Backward

Keyshawn Johnson's reach did not exceed his grasp as the Tampa Bay receiver made this tumbling catch during a 38–24 win over the Vikings on Sunday.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BILL FRAKES

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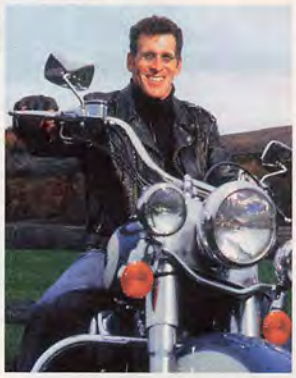
Tom Cousineau, Linebacker

AUGUST 30, 1982

MANY ADULTS think back to when they were in their 20s and see years they now consider wasted. It can happen to anyone, even the No. 1 pick in an NFL draft. Coming off back-to-back All-America seasons at Ohio State, linebacker Tom Cousineau was selected first in the 1979 draft by the Buffalo Bills and then made a career decision—bolting to the Canadian Football League—he would come to regret.

Chosen ahead of future Hall of Famers Dan Hampton, Kellen Winslow and Joe Montana, Cousineau seemed to be a perfect fit with the Bills. He wanted to play for old-school coach Chuck Knox, but the sweet dream turned sour after Cousineau got a bellyful of the Bills' front office.

LATE ARRIVAL Cousineau had 10 interceptions and 6½ sacks in six seasons in the NFL.



When he's not marketing his software product, Cousineau enjoys time with his kids and biking with a Harley club.

Cousineau's agent was ready to fly with him to Buffalo, but they learned at the airport that the Bills had provided only a ticket for Cousineau. Then, after Cousineau's introductory press conference, a key team executive didn't show for a dinner meeting. Finally, when Buffalo's contract offer came in low, at $1.2 million over five years, Cousineau accepted a competing offer—$850,000 for three years from the Montreal Alouettes of the CFL. "As an economic decision it made sense, but it broke my heart," Cousineau says. "I wasn't groomed to play in the CFL. That was not what I dreamed about as a child. In the rearview mirror, those three years were squandered."

Cousineau eventually made it to the NFL in 1982, landing on SI's cover after the Cleveland Browns acquired his rights in a trade with the Bills and made him one of the league's highest-paid linebackers ($3.5 million over five years). He played four seasons for the Browns, making the All-AFC team in '84, and then two more with the San Francisco 49ers before retiring. He lives in Akron with his wife of 12 years, Lisa, an ob-gyn with a full-time practice, and their two daughters, Kyle, 8, and Kacey, 5.

Since leaving football Cousineau has had a hand in several business ventures, including real estate and highway construction. He's currently funding and marketing a software product, Archestral, which manages and centralizes patient data, insurance information and other hospital records. In his free time he rides in a Harley group and ferries his daughters to soccer, gymnastics and tennis events.

Despite regrets about starting his career in the CFL, Cousineau, 45, says he made out well in the end. "I had the good fortune of making a good amount of money," he says. "Very few people, when given the choice of taking more or less, choose less."—*Bill Syken*

TONY TOMSIC (COVER); JAMIE SABAU

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Hurricane Warning

How could Oklahoma make the cover for its 35–24 yawner against overrated Texas (*Football Fever*, Oct. 21)? Miami's 28–27 win over Florida State, decided by FSU's Xavier Beitia—who bucked the wide right trend and sent one wide left—was the thriller of the week.

Chris Bello, San Diego

Punching In

The excerpt from John Feinstein's *The Punch* (Oct. 21) was one of the finest pieces of journalism I have ever read. It brought insight and a sense of compassion to the tragic story of Rudy Tomjanovich and Kermit Washington and elevated a truly awful event into something much bigger: an examination of how a single angry action can change everything. It also showed how every situation, no matter how painful, difficult or unfortunate, offers an opportunity for forgiveness and grace.

Bob Gookin, Marina del Rey, Calif.

Washington's major mistakes were not punching and almost killing Tomjanovich; they were blaming other players, showing little remorse, demanding money from the NBA and invoking racism when he was criticized. He threw the punch and never took sole responsibility for it. He deserves to be a pariah until he does.

Rob Boschetto, Doylestown, Pa.

Although Washington's polygraph results were "almost miraculously high" when asked if he felt threatened by Tomjanovich, it is important to point out that if you tell the same lie often enough, you may eventually believe it yourself.

Doug Reardon, Arlington, Mass.

The actual punch was preceded that season by an SI feature story that glorified Washington, Maurice Lucas, Calvin Murphy and other tough guys (*The Enforcers*, Oct. 31, 1977). The NBA in that era was on a path to NHL-type entertainment. The punch instantly changed the league's attitude toward violence, and that is good.

Jerry Franklin, Carrollton, Va.

Regardless of what Kevin Kunnert did or did not do, it doesn't justify Washington's attack on Tomjanovich. It appears that Washington's thinking in this regard has not advanced beyond that of a young child.

Scott S. Pollard
Hegenheim, France

Reading Feinstein's excerpt brought back the same intensely negative feelings toward Washington that grew within me as a 17-year-old at the time of the incident. And then I asked myself, Would I feel just as negative had the skin color of the men been reversed and a fellow white man had thrown the punch? Sad to say, I think the answer is no.

Ron Stapleton, Canton, Mich.

Driver Education

Jeff MacGregor's portrayal of NASCAR driver Tony Stewart (*Road Rage*, Oct. 21) is yet another example of pandering to talented athletes. Stewart should realize that were it not for the intrusive media, there would probably not be 140,000 fans in the seats, and a man whose main skill is "spooky hand-eye coordination" would certainly not have been able to "earn" over $11.4 million in prize money between 1999 and 2001, nor the millions of endorsement dollars for which he must suffer the travails of handshakes and interviews.

Corey D. Eber, New York City

What Really Matters

Kudos to Rick Reilly for his uplifting and insightful look at Savanna High football (THE LIFE OF REILLY, Oct. 21). The seven-year losing streak has generated plenty of publicity for the team and our town, and too much of it has been negative. A lot can be said about the young men who have suited up over the past seven seasons: Week after week they continue to battle, despite the sometimes overwhelming odds, and have represented their school with heads held high. We should be just as proud of these players as we are of the players who've won conference championships.

Brian Reusch, Savanna, Ill.

Thanks for showing the other side of the story—that sometimes kids just love to play the sport and put it on the line every week. Sixteen or so kids who go up against teams of 30 or more kids week after week, year after year, deserve respect for their desire and dedication.

Robin Bowdish, Scio, Ohio

I am the athletic director at Elmhurst High in Fort Wayne, Ind., and we are currently in the throes of a 63-game football losing streak. I loved the comment that winning and losing are "stuff the adults worry about." Our kids always bounce back and play hard every game.

Julie Hollingsworth, Fort Wayne, Ind.

I think Reilly took a cheap shot at De La Salle and its winning streak. Just because the kids at De La Salle are winning every week does not mean they have lost perspective on life, football or being high school kids. Winning is not the only thing at De La Salle. Working together as a team, treating your opponent with respect and having fun are the main ingredients that have created a remarkable legacy. Spend a week or even just a couple of days with the team, and you will see that the streak is merely a by-product of what Coach Bob Ladouceur and his staff teach their kids.

Joe Washington, San Lorenzo, Calif.

Soccer Pitch

Maybe MLS is "winning America's hearts and minds" as reported in the Oct. 28 SCORECARD, but it has yet to earn legitimacy in SI. The title game was a dramatic sudden-death overtime contest, yet your half-page coverage focused on the finances of the league and had only one sentence about the game. Doesn't a championship game like that warrant more coverage?

Mark Fidler, Waltham, Mass.

To Contact SI

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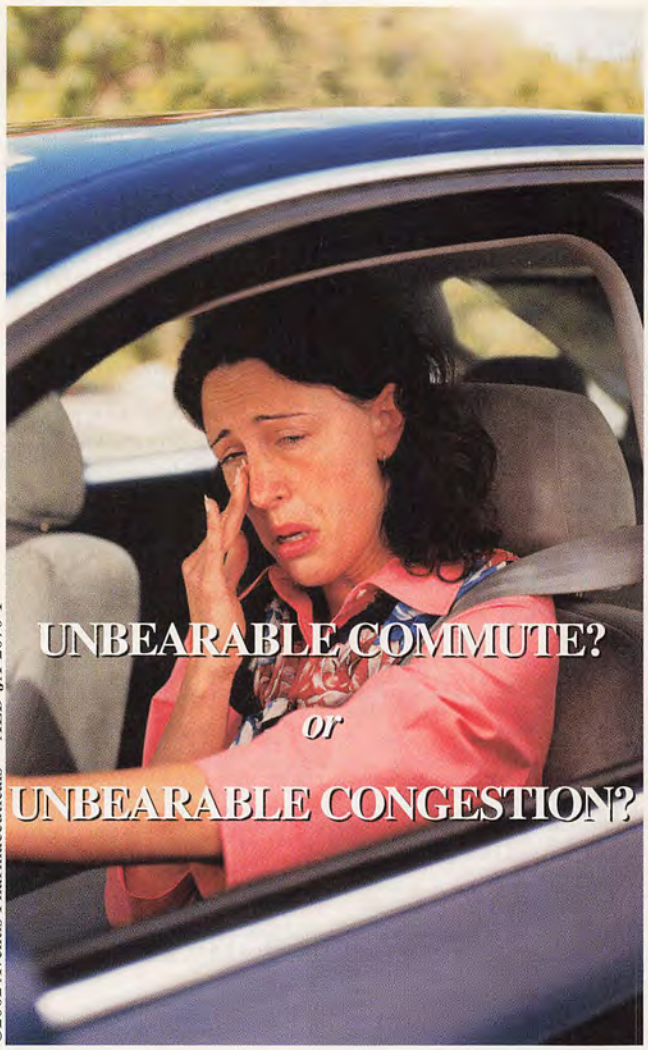

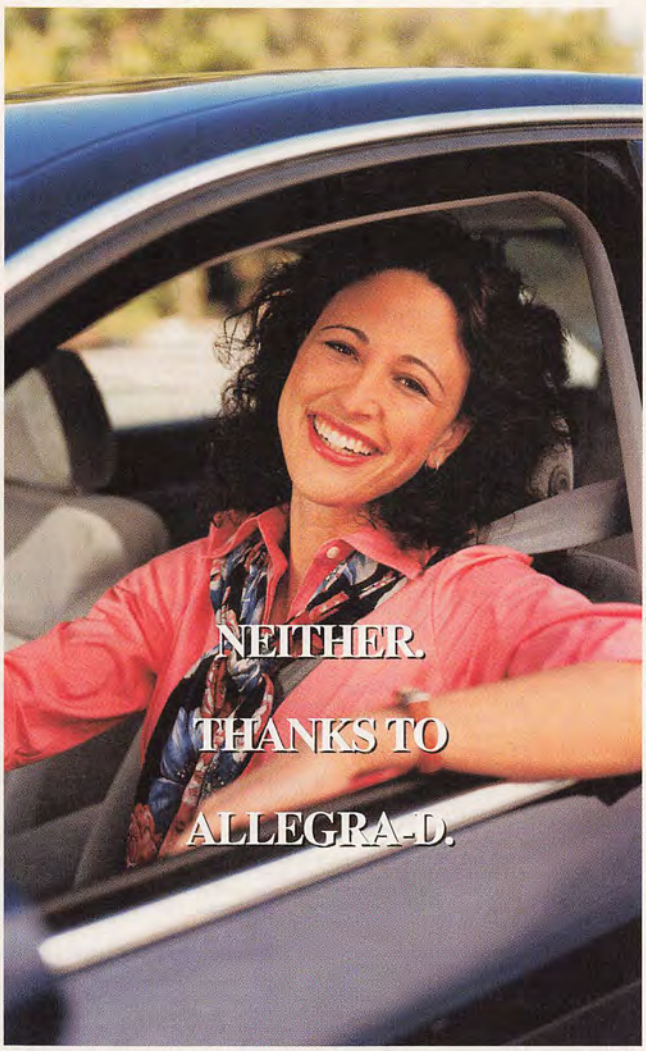

©2002 Aventis Pharmaceuticals ALD-JA-2070-1

Side effects with Allegra-D were similar to Allegra alone and may include headache, insomnia, and nausea. Due to the decongestant (pseudoephedrine) component in Allegra-D, this product must not be used if you: are taking an MAO inhibitor (a medication for depression) or have stopped taking an MAO inhibitor within 14 days; retain urine; have narrow-angle glaucoma; have severe high blood pressure or severe heart disease. You should also tell your doctor if you have high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, glaucoma, thyroid disease, impaired kidney function, or symptoms of an enlarged prostate such as difficulty urinating. Allegra-D is for people twelve and older.

Multi-Symptom Relief:

The stuffy nose and sneezing from seasonal allergies can make any drive hard to take. Only Allegra-D has fexofenadine plus pseudoephedrine. So it provides real relief from allergies and congestion, without the drowsiness that can be caused by many other antihistamines.

Talk to your doctor about Allegra-D, and get on the road to relief today.

For more information, visit allegra.com or call 1-800-allegra.

Real relief. For real living.

allegra-D®
fexofenadine HCl 60 mg/pseudoephedrine HCl 120 mg
Extended-Release Tablets

Please see additional important information on next page.

Brief Summary of
Prescribing Information as of November 2000

ALLEGRA-D®

(fexofenadine HCl 60 mg and pseudoephedrine HCl 120 mg)

Extended-Release Tablets

INDICATIONS AND USAGE

ALLEGRA-D is indicated for the relief of symptoms associated with seasonal allergic rhinitis in adults and children 12 years of age and older. Symptoms treated effectively include sneezing, rhinorrhea, itchy nose/palate/ and/or throat, itchy/watery/red eyes, and nasal congestion.

ALLEGRA-D should be administered when both the antihistaminic properties of fexofenadine hydrochloride and the nasal decongestant properties of pseudoephedrine hydrochloride are desired (see CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY).

CONTRAINDICATIONS

ALLEGRA-D is contraindicated in patients with known hypersensitivity to any of its ingredients.

Due to its pseudoephedrine component, ALLEGRA-D is contraindicated in patients with narrow-angle glaucoma or urinary retention, and in patients receiving monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor therapy or within fourteen (14) days of stopping such treatment (see Drug Interactions section). It is also contraindicated in patients with severe hypertension, or severe coronary artery disease, and in those who have shown hypersensitivity or idiosyncrasy to its components, to adrenergic agents, or to other drugs of similar chemical structures. Manifestations of patient idiosyncrasy to adrenergic agents include: insomnia, dizziness, weakness, tremor, or arrhythmias.

WARNINGS

Sympathomimetic amines should be used judiciously and sparingly in patients with hypertension, diabetes mellitus, ischemic heart disease, increased intraocular pressure, hyperthyroidism, renal impairment, or prostatic hypertrophy (see CONTRAINDICATIONS).Sympathomimetic amines may produce central nervous system stimulation with convulsions or cardiovascular collapse with accompanying hypotension.

PRECAUTIONS

General

Due to its pseudoephedrine component, ALLEGRA-D should be used with caution in patients with hypertension, diabetes mellitus, ischemic heart disease, increased intraocular pressure, hyperthyroidism, renal impairment, or prostatic hypertrophy (see WARNINGS and CONTRAINDICATIONS). Patients with decreased renal function should be given a lower initial dose (one tablet per day) because they have reduced elimination of fexofenadine and pseudoephedrine (See CLINICAL PHARMACOLOGY and DOSAGE AND ADMINISTRATION).

Information for Patients

Patients taking ALLEGRA-D tablets should receive the following information: ALLEGRA-D tablets are prescribed for the relief of symptoms of seasonal allergic rhinitis. Patients should be instructed to take ALLEGRA-D tablets only as prescribed. **Do not exceed the recommended dose.** If nervousness, dizziness, or sleeplessness occur, discontinue use and consult the doctor. Patients should also be advised against the concurrent use of ALLEGRA-D tablets with over-the-counter antihistamines and decongestants.

The product should not be used by patients who are hypersensitive to it or to any of its ingredients. Due to its pseudoephedrine component, this product should not be used by patients with narrow-angle glaucoma, urinary retention, or by patients receiving a monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor or within 14 days of stopping use of MAO inhibitor. It also should not be used by patients with severe hypertension or severe coronary artery disease.

Patients should be told that this product should be used in pregnancy or lactation only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus or nursing infant. Patients should be cautioned not to break or chew the tablet. Patients should be directed to swallow the tablet whole. Patients should be instructed not to take the tablet with food. Patients should also be instructed to store the medication in a tightly closed container in a cool, dry place, away from children.

Drug Interactions

Fexofenadine hydrochloride and pseudoephedrine hydrochloride do not influence the pharmacokinetics of each other when administered concomitantly.

Fexofenadine has been shown to exhibit minimal (ca. 5%) metabolism. However, co-administration of fexofenadine with ketoconazole and erythromycin led to increased plasma levels of fexofenadine. Fexofenadine had no effect on the pharmacokinetics of erythromycin and ketoconazole. In two separate studies, fexofenadine HCl 120 mg BID (twice the recommended dose) was co-administered with erythromycin 500 mg every 8 hours or ketoconazole 400 mg once daily under steady-state conditions to normal, healthy volunteers (n=24, each study). No differences in adverse events or QT_c interval were observed when subjects were administered fexofenadine HCl alone or in combination with erythromycin or ketoconazole. The findings of these studies are summarized in the following table:

Effects on Steady-State Fexofenadine Pharmacokinetics After 7 Days of Co-Administration with Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 120 mg Every 12 Hours (twice recommended dose) in Normal Volunteers (n=24)

Concomitant Drug	$C_{max\ SS}$ *(Peak plasma concentration)*	$AUC_{SS(0\text{-}12h)}$ *(Extent of systemic exposure)*
Erythromycin (500 mg every 8 hrs)	+82%	+109%
Ketoconazole (400 mg once daily)	+135%	+164%

The changes in plasma levels were within the range of plasma levels achieved in adequate and well-controlled clinical trials.

The mechanism of these interactions has been evaluated in *in vitro*, *in situ* and *in vivo* animal models. These studies indicate that ketoconazole or erythromycin co-administration enhances fexofenadine gastrointestinal absorption. In vivo animal studies also suggest that in addition to enhancing absorption, ketoconazole decreases fexofenadine gastrointestinal secretion, while erythromycin may also decrease biliary excretion.

ALLEGRA-D tablets (pseudoephedrine component) are contraindicated in patients taking monoamine oxidase inhibitors and for 14 days after stopping use of an MAO inhibitor. Concomitant use with antihypertensive drugs which interfere with sympathetic activity (eg, methyldopa, mecamylamine, and reserpine) may reduce their antihypertensive effects. Increased ectopic pacemaker activity can occur when pseudoephedrine is used concomitantly with digitalis.

Care should be taken in the administration of ALLEGRA-D concomitantly with other sympathomimetic amines because combined effects on the cardiovascular system may be harmful to the patient (see WARNINGS).

Carcinogenesis, Mutagenesis, Impairment of Fertility

There are no animal or *in vitro* studies on the combination product fexofenadine hydrochloride and pseudoephedrine hydrochloride to evaluate carcinogenesis, mutagenesis, or impairment of fertility.

The carcinogenic potential and reproductive toxicity of fexofenadine hydrochloride were assessed using terfenadine studies with adequate fexofenadine exposure (area-under-the plasma concentration versus time curve [AUC]). No evidence of carcinogenicity was observed when mice and rats were given daily oral doses up to 150 mg/kg of terfenadine for 18 and 24 months, respectively. In both species, 150 mg/kg of terfenadine produced AUC values of fexofenadine that were approximately 3 times the human AUC at the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults.

Two-year feeding studies in rats and mice conducted under the auspices of the National Toxicology Program (NTP) demonstrated no evidence of carcinogenic potential with ephedrine sulfate, a structurally related drug with pharmacological properties similar to pseudoephedrine, at doses up to 10 and 27 mg/kg, respectively (approximately 1/3 and 1/2, respectively, the maximum recommended daily oral dose of pseudoephedrine hydrochloride in adults on a mg/m^2 basis).

In *in vitro* (Bacterial Reverse Mutation, CHO/HGPRT Forward Mutation, and Rat Lymphocyte Chromosomal Aberration assays) and *in vivo* (Mouse Bone Marrow Micronucleus assay) tests, fexofenadine hydrochloride revealed no evidence of mutagenicity.

Reproduction and fertility studies with terfenadine in rats produced no effect on male or female fertility at oral doses up to 300 mg/kg/day. However, reduced implants and post implantation losses were reported at 300 mg/kg. A reduction in implants was also observed at an oral dose of 150 mg/kg/day. Oral doses of 150 and 300 mg/kg of terfenadine produced AUC values of fexofenadine that were approximately 3 and 4 times, respectively, the human AUC at the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults.

Pregnancy

Teratogenic Effects: Category C. Terfenadine alone was not teratogenic in rats and rabbits at oral doses up to 300 mg/kg; 300 mg/kg of terfenadine produced fexofenadine AUC values that were approximately 4 and 30 times, respectively, the human AUC at the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults.

The combination of terfenadine and pseudoephedrine hydrochloride in a ratio of 1:2 by weight was studied in rats and rabbits. In rats, an oral combination dose of 150/300 mg/kg produced reduced fetal weight and delayed ossification with a finding of wavy ribs. The dose of 150 mg/kg of terfenadine in rats produced an AUC value of fexofenadine that was approximately 3 times the human AUC at the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults. The dose of 300 mg/kg of pseudoephedrine hydrochloride in rats was approximately 10 times the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults on a mg/m^2 basis. In rabbits, an oral combination dose of 100/200 mg/kg produced decreased fetal weight. By extrapolation, the AUC of fexofenadine for 100 mg/kg orally of terfenadine was approximately 10 times the human AUC at the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults. The dose of 200 mg/kg of pseudoephedrine hydrochloride was approximately 15 times the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults on a mg/m^2 basis.

There are no adequate and well-controlled studies in pregnant women. ALLEGRA-D should be used during pregnancy only if the potential benefit justifies the potential risk to the fetus.

Nonteratogenic Effects. Dose-related decreases in pup weight gain and survival were observed in rats exposed to an oral dose of 150 mg/kg of terfenadine; this dose produced an AUC of fexofenadine that was approximately 3 times the human AUC at the maximum recommended daily oral dose in adults.

Nursing Mothers

It is not known if fexofenadine is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, caution should be used when fexofenadine hydrochloride is administered to a nursing woman. Pseudoephedrine hydrochloride administered alone distributes into breast milk of lactating human females. Pseudoephedrine concentrations in milk are consistently higher than those in plasma. The total amount of drug in milk as judged by AUC is 2 to 3 times greater than the plasma AUC. The fraction of a pseudoephedrine dose excreted in milk is estimated to be 0.4% to 0.7%. A decision should be made whether to discontinue nursing or to discontinue the drug, taking into account the importance of the drug to the mother. Caution should be exercised when ALLEGRA-D is administered to nursing women.

Pediatric Use

Safety and effectiveness of ALLEGRA-D in pediatric patients under the age of 12 years have not been established.

Geriatric Use

Clinical studies of ALLEGRA-D did not include sufficient numbers of patients aged 65 and older to determine whether they respond differently from younger patients. Other reported clinical experience has not identified differences in responses between the elderly and younger patients, although the elderly are more likely to have adverse reactions to sympathomimetic amines. In general, dose selection for an elderly patient should be cautious, usually starting at the low end of the dosing range, reflecting the greater frequency of decreased hepatic, renal, or cardiac function, and of concomitant disease or other drug therapy.

The pseudoephedrine component of ALLEGRA-D is known to be substantially excreted by the kidney, and the risk of toxic reactions to this drug may be greater in patients with impaired renal function. Because elderly patients are more likely to have decreased renal function, care should be taken in dose selection, and it may be useful to monitor renal function.

ADVERSE REACTIONS

ALLEGRA-D

In one clinical trial (n=651) in which 215 patients with seasonal allergic rhinitis received the 60 mg fexofenadine hydrochloride/120 mg pseudoephedrine hydrochloride combination tablet twice daily for up to 2 weeks, adverse events were similar to those reported either in patients receiving fexofenadine hydrochloride 60 mg alone (n=218 patients) or in patients receiving pseudoephedrine hydrochloride 120 mg alone (n=218). A placebo group was not included in this study.

The percent of patients who withdrew prematurely because of adverse events was 3.7% for the fexofenadine hydrochloride/pseudoephedrine hydrochloride combination group, 0.5% for the fexofenadine hydrochloride group, and 4.1% for the pseudoephedrine hydrochloride group. All adverse events that were reported by greater than 1% of patients who received the recommended daily dose of the fexofenadine hydrochloride/pseudoephedrine hydrochloride combination are listed in the following table.

Adverse Experiences Reported in One Active-Controlled Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis Clinical Trial at Rates of Greater than 1%

Adverse Experience	60 mg Fexofenadine Hydrochloride/120 mg Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride Combination Tablet Twice Daily (n=215)	Fexofenadine Hydrochloride 60 mg Twice Daily (n=218)	Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride 120 mg Twice Daily (n=218)
Headache	13.0%	11.5%	17.4%
Insomnia	12.6%	3.2%	13.3%
Nausea	7.4%	0.5%	5.0%
Dry Mouth	2.8%	0.5%	5.5%
Dyspepsia	2.8%	0.5%	0.9%
Throat Irritation	2.3%	1.8%	0.5%
Dizziness	1.9%	0.0%	3.2%
Agitation	1.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Back Pain	1.9%	0.5%	0.5%
Palpitation	1.9%	0.0%	0.9%
Nervousness	1.4%	0.5%	1.8%
Anxiety	1.4%	0.0%	1.4%
Upper Respiratory Infection	1.4%	0.9%	0.9%
Abdominal Pain	1.4%	0.5%	0.5%

Many of the adverse events occurring in the fexofenadine hydrochloride/pseudoephedrine hydrochloride combination group were adverse events also reported predominately in the pseudoephedrine hydrochloride group, such as insomnia, headache, nausea, dry mouth, dizziness, agitation, nervousness, anxiety, and palpitation.

Fexofenadine Hydrochloride

In placebo-controlled clinical trials, which included 2461 patients receiving fexofenadine hydrochloride at doses of 20 mg to 240 mg twice daily, adverse events were similar in fexofenadine hydrochloride and placebo-treated patients. The incidence of adverse events, including drowsiness, was not dose related and was similar across subgroups defined by age, gender, and race. The percent of patients who withdrew prematurely because of adverse events was 2.2% with fexofenadine hydrochloride vs 3.3% with placebo.

Events that have been reported during controlled clinical trials involving seasonal allergic rhinitis and chronic idiopathic urticaria patients with incidences less than 1% and similar to placebo and have been rarely reported during postmarketing surveillance include: insomnia, nervousness, and sleep disorders or paroniria. In rare cases, rash, urticaria, pruritus and hypersensitivity reactions with manifestations such as angioedema, chest tightness, dyspnea, flushing and systemic anaphylaxis have been reported.

Pseudoephedrine Hydrochloride

Pseudoephedrine hydrochloride may cause mild CNS stimulation in hypersensitive patients. Nervousness, excitability, restlessness, dizziness, weakness, or insomnia may occur. Headache, drowsiness, tachycardia, palpitation, pressor activity, and cardiac arrhythmias have been reported. Sympathomimetic drugs have also been associated with other untoward effects such as fear, anxiety, tenseness, tremor, hallucinations, seizures, pallor, respiratory difficulty, dysuria, and cardiovascular collapse.

Prescribing Information as of November 2000

Aventis Pharmaceuticals Inc.
Kansas City, MO 64137 USA

US Patents 4,254,129; 5,375,693; 5,578,610.

www.allegra.com

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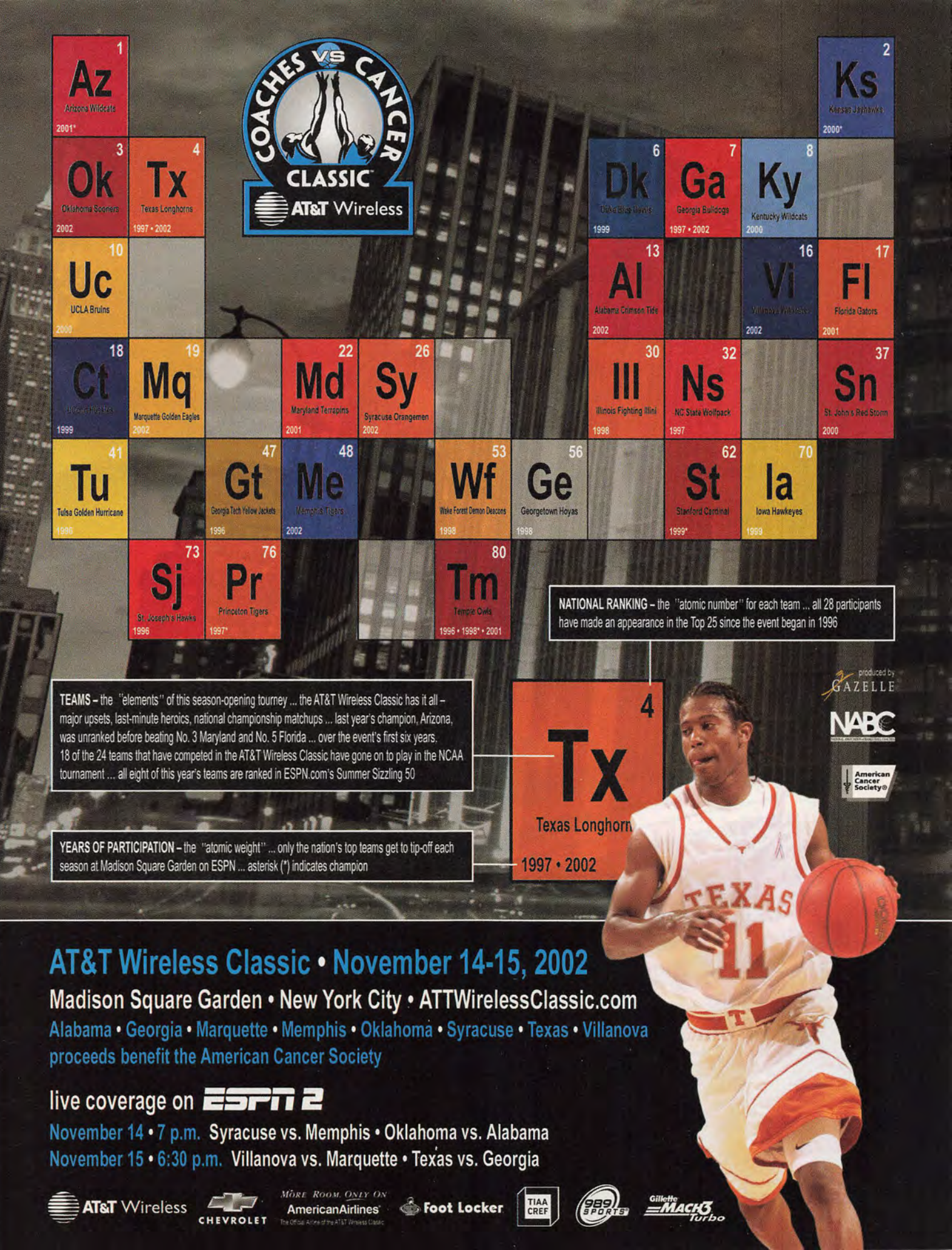
Aventis Pharmaceuticals
Bridgewater, NJ 08807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2 Ks Kansas Jayhawks 2000*
3 Ok Oklahoma Sooners 2002
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6 Dk Duke Blue Devils 1999
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8 Ky Kentucky Wildcats 2000
10 Uc UCLA Bruins 2000
13 Al Alabama Crimson Tide 2002
16 Vi Villanova Wildcats 2002
17 Fl Florida Gators 2001
18 Ct UConn Huskies 1999
19 Mq Marquette Golden Eagles 2002
22 Md Maryland Terrapins 2001
26 Sy Syracuse Orangemen 2002
30 Ill Illinois Fighting Illini 1998
32 Ns NC State Wolfpack 1997
37 Sn St. John's Red Storm 2000
41 Tu Tulsa Golden Hurricane 1996
47 Gt Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets 1996
48 Me Memphis Tigers 2002
53 Wf Wake Forest Demon Deacons 1998
56 Ge Georgetown Hoyas 1998
62 St Stanford Cardinal 1999*
70 Ia Iowa Hawkeyes 1999
73 Sj St. Joseph's Hawks 1996
76 Pr Princeton Tigers 1997*
80 Tm Temple Owls 1996 • 1998* • 2001
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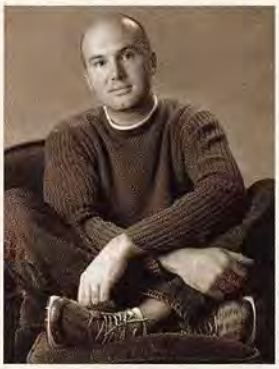
Always on Sundays



JEFFERY A. SALTER

by Steve Rushin

THIS ELECTION WEEK, in the interest of equal time, we give voice to another kind of professional athlete, one who's never made a headline, an excuse or a Bentley payment. What he *has* made, instead, is every plane, practice and block required of him in 15 seasons of professional football. Ray Brown of the Lions hasn't missed a start in more than eight years, hasn't missed a *down* in more than five years and has quietly accrued a small fortune for his family on one guiding principle. "It's simple," says Brown, a right guard who'll turn 40 next month. "My only rule is, Don't break any rules."

Brown has no publicist, pedicurist or defense attorney; he hasn't been on *Cribs*, crack or probation. Indeed, his personal goals sound kinky in the context of contemporary sports. "I don't want to be late, I don't want to miss meetings and I want to be accountable for my actions," he says. No *wonder* you've never heard of this guy.

Brown has never pulled a Sharpie from his sock (though, at 6' 5" and 318, he could easily pull a shar-pei from his sock). He doesn't require validation, except when parking his car. His turn-ons? "Those 'Good jobs' and 'Well dones' from my coaches and peers in the meeting room," he says. "I don't need to hear my name screamed over the P.A. system. Other than introductions, that's a *bad* thing to hear if you're an offensive lineman."

So pull up a chair. *This* is how you play two decades in the National Football League. *Oldest Living Offensive Lineman Tells All.* The main thing to remember? "Don't be anywhere near a football in the NFL," advises Brown. "Oh, my goodness, no. Everybody chases that ball."

Who would know better? The other day Brown asked linemate Stockar McDougle, with more wonderment than vanity, "You know how many Number 1 picks have come and gone since I've been playing?" Indeed, Brown was drafted so long ago—out of Arkansas State—that neither his team (the St. Louis Cardinals) nor his round (eighth) still exists. Until that draft day, in 1986, he had no agent, no expectations, no ESPN even. Says Brown, "I came home from class, and my roommate told me, 'Someone called and said you were drafted.' " For all either of them knew, it was the U.S. Army.

As a 237-pound tackle Brown nurtured a vivid if delusional fantasy. "The dream was to play four years," he says, "and be vested in the retirement program." Instead he was waived by the Cards in '87 and brought back as a replacement player during that season's strike. "In hindsight," says Brown, "if I'd understood the labor issues, I probably wouldn't have played." But he did, and coaches got to see his skills, and he wound up in Washington, doing what the Stamps did toward the end of Elvis Presley's career: backing up a Hog.

All that time, Brown lifted weights and understudied the best offensive line of our time and refused to give way to despair, like a chrome bumper to rust. One day in 1993 he stepped in to replace an injured Jeff Bostic, and he hasn't missed a single start in the nine seasons since, with Washington, San Francisco and Detroit. "My father always told me to be ready because my time would come," says Brown, "so I always made sure I was prepared. This game is pretty basic if you don't allow vices in your way."

Leonard Ray Brown Sr., who died in June, raised eight children in Marion, Ark., on a truck driver's salary. "He was also a deacon who opened the church every Sunday morning," says his son and namesake, "the kind of guy everybody could bring their problems to." Like Sr., Ray Jr. has been working Sundays all *his* adult life and believing in eternal verities: clean living, perseverance and giving back to one's community. And so last February, as a 39-year-old, Brown was named to his first Pro Bowl. What was Hawaii like?

> Ray Brown hasn't missed an NFL game in more than eight years, hasn't missed a *down* in more than five.

"A lot like Marion, Arkansas," he says. "We pretty much brought the whole town there."

It mattered not that the 49ers released him, for payroll reasons, this summer. The Lions immediately signed Brown to a one-year, $750,000 contract. And two weeks ago in Detroit, his wife, Ashley, gave birth to their fifth child, a son named Ray Brown III. Six-year-old Miriam Brown told her father just last week, "You have to play two more years so Trey will know what you do for a living." Brown can see playing at least one more. "But if I don't," he says, "I've had a great run. I know I'm on somebody else's time now."

In fact, the only men Brown has ever envied in 15 seasons of football are those he passes on his way into the stadium. So, when he *does* retire, he plans to get down to some serious tailgating. "You've seen Lambeau?" he asks. "That's *classic*: The brats, those fires in the garbage cans? It's the same way in Buffalo. I'm very appreciative of the passion NFL fans have for their teams, and I want to bring that same passion to games myself, probably on the college level somewhere."

He is warming to the subject now, like a man over a flaming trash receptacle. "I want to stay *long* after the games," says Brown, "barbecuing, having a few beers, in no rush to go home." A rush to go home? Surely no one would accuse him of *that*. □

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"Is Tiger Woods bigger than the First Amendment?" —IRE OF THE TIGER, PAGE 22

Scorecard

Edited by Kostya Kennedy and Richard Deitsch

Sue the Coach!

Want to get your kid more playing time? Hate the varsity's game plan? Just call your lawyer

For a youth league baseball coach, what could be worse than going 0–15? Ask Rodney Carroll. Soon after Carroll guided the Brunswick (Ohio) Cobras to a winless season in 1999, a summons arrived, informing him that he was being sued for $2,000 by the father of his catcher. The complaint? Poor coaching. Carroll's incompetence, the suit claimed, cost the team a trip to a tournament in Florida. "I didn't understand it," says Carroll, 43, a street-maintenance worker who had volunteered for two years. "I wanted to be a coach just to help kids."

If that sounds like an isolated case of a litigious sports dad, it isn't. A surprising number of coaches are being taken to court for matters involving game plans, lineups, teaching and all the other things that they normally do. A group that studies sports-related lawsuits in North America, From the Gym to the Jury, reports that more than 1,300 suits involving high school and youth sports have been filed in the last five years, a jump of about 35% from the previous five-year period. Some cases deal with negligence and injury, but many are what lawyers call "personal feelings" suits—cases that, to a large degree, hinge on the notion that a coach who ticks off a parent or student is liable for financial damages.

"Ask a room full of coaches if they've been sued, or if they know anyone who's been sued," says Tim Flannery, assistant director of the National Federation of State High School Associations. "Everyone in the room would raise their hands."

Consider two recent cases: A Levittown (Pa.) High softball player, upset primarily over a pitching technique her coach taught her, is seeking $700,000. She says her chances for a college scholarship were compromised because the pitching method is technically illegal. Then there are the two baton twirlers who were cut from the majorettes program at North Haven High in Connecticut. Their mothers hired a lawyer to argue that, under the 14th Amendment, being a majorette is a noncompetitive activity that shouldn't exclude anyone. "We're just protecting our rights," says Dolores Tata, one of the complainants. Both cases are pending, as legal fees mount.

Most anticoach suits follow a course similar to that of the mother in Rimouski, Que., who took legal action after her 14-year-old son was benched during what she says was a "critical" hockey game. She sought $1,000 in damages to cover league registration, hockey classes and, of course, mental distress. She lost. "Most cases are won by coaches," says Gil Fried, a law professor at the University of New Haven. "Courts conclude this is a game and the coach has authority."

Yet even with the statistics in the coaches' favor and even though only 5% to 7% of all suits go to trial (about 30% of sports suits settle out of court), the litigation almost always has an impact. Consider the case of Blake Chong, basketball coach at Logan High in Union City, Calif., who in 2001 was named in a $1.5 million suit filed by a father whose son had been relegated to the junior varsity. The father sued the school district for his son's potential lost earnings and sought Chong's dismissal. Nine months into the case a judge threw it out. Still, "it took up my time every single day," says Chong. "It takes a toll on you, mentally and physically."

Often there's a financial cost as well. According to Sadler & Co., which insures 4,000 sports organizations nationwide, the number of coaches buying insurance against claims such as discrimination and economic damage has doubled since 1997. Many coaches, even if they can afford bigger insurance bills, are following the lead of Rodney Carroll. After a judge threw out that Ohio father's claim against him, Carroll took a look at his situation—and quit coaching. Want to talk trends in youth sports? With so many parents suing, an exodus of coaches could easily be the next big thing. —*Christina Asquith*

Asquith, a writer in New York, has covered education for Teacher Magazine *and* The Economist.

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT MENCHIN

The Ire of the Tiger

Woods's handlers want his image pulled from a clean-water campaign

Despite Earl Woods's pronouncements comparing his son's social impact with Gandhi's, Tiger Woods has never shown interest in being a political crusader. (See Woods's wishy-washy response to Augusta National's men-only policy.) So it must have been a jarring sight for Michigan motorists when, on Oct. 1, a larger-than-life Woods popped up on six billboards around the state, supporting Proposal 2, a $1 billion bond measure on the Nov. 5 ballot that would earmark money to fight water pollution.

Did the ad signal Woods's entrance into politics? Fat chance. His likeness had been used without permission by Grand Rapids artist Mark Heckman. A nongolfer, Heckman had seized on Woods when he picked WATER HAZARD as the headline. "I didn't think it was a big deal," he says. "Who's opposed to clean water?"

I DON'T FEEL UP TO PAR!
WATER HAZARD
VOTE YES ON PROPOSAL 2 NOV 5
Protect Our Lakes, Rivers & Beaches
WATER HAZARD
VOTE YES ON PROPOSAL 2
Protect Our Lakes, Rivers & Beaches
VIACOM

HOLD THAT TIGER Heckman erased Woods from the original billboard (top) but hasn't apologized.

But Woods's agent, Mark Steinberg, was angered by the billboards. In the *Detroit Free Press* on Oct. 19, Steinberg was quoted as saying, "The most disappointing thing is that a political position is stated and that's just wrong, so outrageously wrong." He also vaguely mentioned "recourse." On Oct. 21 the ads—which had been paid for by Peter Wege, a Michigan millionaire active in environmental causes—were taken down by the billboard company. But after Heckman talked with the company's owner they went back up, with Woods's image painted over. Says Heckman, "I thought that was the end of it."

It wasn't. The next day he received a letter from Woods's lawyers, reading in part, "This prominent and unconsented [sic] use of the image and identity of Mr. Woods has caused Mr. Woods considerable monetary damages." The letter demanded Heckman use the same billboards, for one week, to apologize.

This kind of hardball is not foreign to Woods, who in 1998 sued Alabama artist Rich Rush, hoping to prevent the sale of paintings depicting his victory at the '97 Masters. In April 2000 a federal district court ruled against Woods, saying Rush's portrayal was "an artistic creation seeking to express a message." The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit has yet to rule on the appeal. Heckman, meanwhile, says he feels bullied by Woods's lawyers and isn't sure what he'll do about any apology. "What ever happened to political satire?" he says. "Is Tiger Woods bigger than the First Amendment?"

—Alan Shipnuck

GO FIGURE

1 U.S. woman (Deena Drossin last year) ever to run a New York Marathon faster than Marla Runyan's 2:27:10; the legally blind runner finished fifth behind Kenya's Joyce Chepchumba on Sunday.

67 Foreign-born players in the NBA, the most ever.

10 Foreign-born players in 1984–85, commissioner David Stern's first season.

6 NFL teams who have employed quarterback Jeff George, who signed with the Seahawks last week.

433 Consecutive regular-season sellouts for the Knicks, a streak that ended on Monday, against the Bucks.

9,491 Attendance at the 17,565-seat FleetCenter for the Bruins–Mighty Ducks game on Oct. 31, the smallest crowd at a Bruins home game since 1987.

1,356 Straight games in which Jazz forward Karl Malone had scored before he went 0 for 7 from the field and was shut out by the SuperSonics on Sunday.

$1,100 Price fetched for a bra signed by Canada's women's Olympic hockey team in an eBay auction benefiting the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

$876.79 Price fetched in the same auction for a bra signed by Celine Dion.

SPOT CHECK THE NBA'S LOVE IT LIVE

JUMPIN' SHAQ FLASH Sandler (top) and Jagger appear between NBA highlights.

They're not the most expensive commercials the league has produced—they just look that way, thanks to appearances by $20 million-a-movie man Adam Sandler, the Rolling Stones and, if things go as expected, Elvis and Frank Sinatra. But while the league won't say what the spots cost, NBA Entertainment vice president Scott Weinstock does explain that the idea behind the Love It Live campaign was to move butts from La-Z-Boys to arena seats. That would continue the momentum from last season, when NBA attendance rose slightly.

And don't think the league is aiming at the post-50 crowd by using Mick, Keith, the King and Ol' Blue Eyes: There's a fine line, at least in the eyes of marketing whizzes, between baby boomers and retro dudes like Kobe Bryant and Outkast's Big Boi, who favor those vintage basketball jerseys and generally seem fascinated by the pop cultural past. Ultimately, the connection between the older stars and the NBA is simple: "Those guys are pop icons, and our players are pop icons," Weinstock says.

NBAE (SANDLER); NBAE (JAGGER); MARK HECKMAN (TIGER BILLBOARD); PAUL L. NEWBY II (TIGERLESS BILLBOARD)

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FOR THE RECORD

Threatened By former U.S. Olympic figure skater Tonya Harding, 31, a lawsuit against Made In Oregon, distributors of Tonya Hot Sauce. The label features an unflattering caricature of Harding smoking a cigarette outside a trailer, with ice skates in one hand and a hubcap in the other. It reads, "A sauce not for the weak-kneed" and "Guaranteed to assault your taste buds." It also includes a quote from an N. Kerrigan exclaiming, "It's a lead-pipe cinch you'll love it!" The five-ounce bottles retail for about $5. Harding's lawyer, William Markham, says Harding is a "world-class athlete" and that the company is misappropriating her image.

Controversial Condiment

Awarded To ex-Flyers defenseman Dave Babych, $1.37 million, by a New Jersey court. Babych, 41, had sued former team doctor Arthur Bartolozzi, contending that the Flyers and Bartolozzi pressured him to play on a broken left foot in the 1998 playoffs, which exacerbated the injury and forced him to retire prematurely, in 2000. The jury found that Bartolozzi had "deviated from accepted standards in treating the injury." Babych who says his foot is still "not right," had sought $2.3 million.

Banned By the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, aluminum bats, from its state baseball tournament. In the 2001 season two pitchers suffered serious injuries after being struck in the head by a batted ball; the MIAA evaluated other anecdotal evidence and ruled that balls fly off aluminum bats at dangerous speeds. Last month Massachusetts' executive board of baseball coaches voted 17–1 against the proposed ban. "We're in shock," says David Ettinger, legal council for Easton, the U.S.'s largest aluminum bat manufacturer. Ettinger also says the company is considering taking legal action against the state.

Ordered To lose weight or lose his job, Mets first baseman Mo Vaughn, 34. According to reports, Mets executives have warned Vaughn that if he does not lessen his girth—he was listed at 6′ 1″, 275 pounds last year—he could be in violation of a standard contract clause that requires a player to stay in "first-class physical condition" and obey his team's training rules. Vaughn, who batted .259 with 26 home runs in 2002, often had trouble bending to field ground balls and made 18 errors, the most in the majors by a first baseman. A nutritionist, physician and personal trainer have reportedly been hired to oversee his off-season regimen.

Offered By the ECHL's Cincinnati Cyclones, a 15-game tryout to forward Hayley Wickenheiser, 24, the Canadian Olympic star regarded as the world's best female hockey player. Wickenheiser, who would be the first female nongoalie to play in a pro men's league, has also talked to men's teams in Austria and Germany and would prefer to play in Europe, where the sport is less violent than in North America. "My place in the male game would be as a finesse player," she says. "I don't know if [the notoriously rough ECHL] would be in my best interest, but I can't totally say no."

Stabbed In the left thigh, Wisconsin's star tailback Anthony Davis, by his girlfriend Tiffany Spears during a dispute in Davis's apartment early Sunday morning. Badgers coach Barry Alvarez says Davis, a junior who had rushed for 1,001 yards on 204 carries, might not play this week against Illinois. The incident capped a rough weekend for Wisconsin: Last Friday senior wide receiver Lee Evans was arrested for possession of marijuana. On Saturday the Badgers lost 20–3 to Iowa.

Godzilla vs. the Majors

Announced By Japanese baseball star Hideki Matsui, just hours after winning his third Japanese Central League MVP award, that he will leave the Yomiuri Giants for the American major leagues. While the Mariners' Ichiro Suzuki has thrived by slapping singles past infielders and speeding around the bases, the 6′ 1″, 210-pound Matsui, who is nicknamed Godzilla, will try to become the first Japanese power hitter to succeed in the U.S. "Ichiro had to hit for average, but he had the whole field to work with," said Japanese home run king Sadaharu Oh. "Matsui will be expected to hit balls out of the park."

Scouts say that Matsui—a lefthanded slugger who hit 332 home runs in 10 seasons for the Giants, including 50 this year (the Japanese record is 55 in the current 140-game season)—has a fast bat but is undisciplined at the plate. Under Japanese rules teams may begin negotiating with Matsui, 28, on Nov. 13. Matsui, who earned a Japanese record $5.1 million last season and became eligible for free agency upon completing nine years of service, is expected to land a salary of between $8 million and $10 million per year. Several teams are expected to bid for him, and the Yankees, who in August sent assistant general manager Jean Afterman to watch Matsui in Japan, are the favorites to sign him. "For a long time I've been watching American baseball on television," said Matsui, who hit .334 with a league-high 107 RBIs. "But it was only in recent years that, realistically, I've been thinking about playing there."

GOING, GOING . . . Will Matsui be able to clear the fences in the larger U.S. parks?

The departure of Matsui, the most popular player on Japan's most popular team, has disappointed fans, though most are rooting for Godzilla to conquer America. "It is sad that he is leaving Japanese baseball stadiums," said Japanese prime minister Junichiro Koizumi. "But I am looking forward to seeing how many homers a Japanese slugger, the home run king, can hit. I have high hopes."

ALAN HICKS (HOT SAUCE); RICH FRISHMAN (WICKENHEISER); KYODO NEWS (MATSUI)

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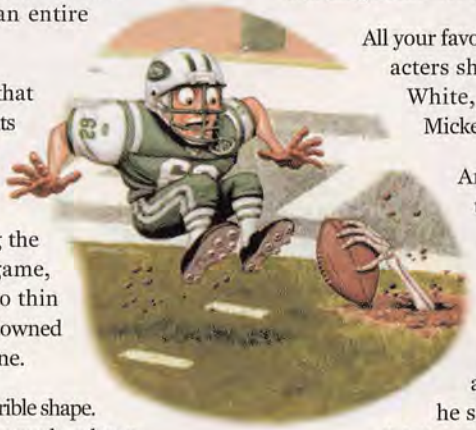
THE SHOW | BY BILL SCHEFT

I missed the Country Music Awards. Help me out here. Did David Eckstein win for Best Banjo Hitter?

PATS ROUT BILLS IN BALLYHOOED BRADY-BLEDSOE MATCHUP Tom Brady threw for 310 yards, four touchdowns and completed passes to everyone except Tara Reid.

Elsewhere, Bengals coach Dick LeBeau delivered on his guarantee of a win over the Texans. LeBeau's getting cocky. He's predicting there won't be a sequel to *I Spy*.

The Seahawks signed quarterback Jeff George. Mike Holmgren is confident that by Week 10, George'll be able to disregard an entire game plan.



Did you hear that the field at Giants Stadium is being re-sodded? Last month, during the Browns-Jets game, the turf was so thin Jimmy Hoffa downed a punt at the one.

The field's in terrible shape. The grounds crew has been mending divots with Bob Tisch's old hairpieces.

KNICKS BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE They just extended the contract of coach Don Chaney. That's Step 1. Step 2: Schedule three games a month against the Washington Generals.

Cavaliers coach John Lucas served a two-game suspension after he included the nation's top high school player, LeBron James, in a workout at Gund Arena. Are you like me? Are you thinking one day in Cleveland might drive the kid to college?

Telemundo announced its NBA broadcast team. Bit of a shocker: Dan Issel and John Calipari.

The Hornets have tweaked their logo slightly to reflect the team's move to New Orleans. Now the hornet is shirtless, drunk and staggering down Bourbon Street holding a pitcher of stingers.

MAPLE LEAFS OFF TO A BAD START If they give up any more goals, Ed Belfour will have to change his name to Bel4.87.

In other hockey news fans at Madison Square Garden have begun chanting "Refund!" when the Rangers fall behind. You know, if this works, Latrell Sprewell might try it with Scott Layden.

Tom Hicks has put the Stars up for sale. The club is valued at $207 million, but he'll take $150 million from A-Rod.

ANGELS VICTORY PARADE DRAWS 100,000 Actually, it was 60,000, plus the people standing in line for Space Mountain.

All your favorite Disney characters showed up: Snow White, Donald Duck, Mickey Hatcher.

And meanwhile the man who attacked Royals first base coach Tom Gamboa called a local newspaper and apologized. Yeah, he said he's sorry he didn't wear one of those tattoos for Goldenpalace.com.

NEW YORK CITY IS U.S. PICK TO HOST 2012 OLYMPICS I just hope Dick Ebersol will be plausibly live to see this happen.

New York edged out San Francisco to make the finals. The two cities are still battling for the rights to open a Liza Minnelli theme park.

WILLIAMS SISTERS SIGN LUCRATIVE PACT WITH McDONALD'S As part of the deal their dad, Richard, gets to serve a four-year term replacing Mayor McCheese.

A.C. GREEN REVEALS HE LOST HIS VIRGINITY LAST APRIL And I don't understand this, but his agent, Mark Fleisher, had wanted him to hold out until the second week of training camp.

My time is up. You've been great. Enjoy Thin Lizzy.

Q+A BRIDGETTE WILSON-SAMPRAS

Though she's eight months pregnant, the 29-year-old actress and wife of tennis star Pete Sampras is still quick on her feet. Her latest film, *Extreme Ops*, opens on Nov. 27.

"Pete will be a Mr. Mom"

SI: *If you have a boy, would you consider naming him Andre or Lleyton?*
Wilson-Sampras: No.

SI: *You play an Olympic gold medal skier in* Extreme Ops. *How good a skier are you?*
Wilson-Sampras: Should I be truthful? I've only skied a couple of times in my life. Any skier would say I stink.

SI: *You performed your own stunts in* Mortal Kombat. *How many stunts did you perform for this movie?*
Wilson-Sampras: I did some stuff, but all the beautiful, wide skiing shots you see are not me. Sometimes it's a man in a ski suit and a blond wig who looks just enough like me.

SI: *In real life could J-Lo really steal Matthew McConaughey from you as she did in* The Wedding Planner?
Wilson-Sampras: [Laughs.] I'll take the Fifth on that.

SI: *In 1999 Pete called you, having never met you. What did he say that persuaded you to go out with him?*
Wilson-Sampras: He actually left a message the first time. He was just so sweet and humble, and it was such a cute message, I was like, O.K., I'll call him.

SI: *What does your heart say about Pete's playing next year?*
Wilson-Sampras: I'm mixed because it's all in his court. The great thing about it is he's in a position where he can do whatever he wants to do. If he wants to continue to play and enjoys it, a lot of the pressure is off. If he doesn't want to play, he doesn't have to.

SI: *Would you rather he play or stay home and be Mr. Mom?*
Wilson-Sampras: He'll be a little of Mr. Mom if he's on the road or not. I told him, "Wait and make your decision once little Pee-Wee comes. Middle of the night wake-ups and feedings might make you go, 'I really need to go play tennis.' "

SI: *Finally, would you ever have Andre and Steffi Agassi over for some lunch and a game of doubles?*
Wilson-Sampras: If it's Andre and [their infant son], Jaden, against me and Pete, I just might consider it.
—R.D.

For more from Wilson-Sampras, go to cnnsi.com/scorecard.

ILLUSTRATION BY JEFF WONG; LESTER COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM (WILSON-SAMPRAS)

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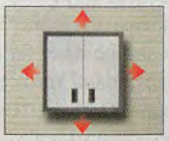

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SPORTS BEAT

PICTURE THIS Halloween came a night early for Mavericks coach Don Nelson and his son, assistant coach Donn. Hit with a two-game suspension for illegally attending two amateur workouts this summer in Yugoslavia, the Nelsons traded courtside pinstripes for prison stripes and went to a Dallas restaurant to watch the Mavs' season-opening 119–108 win over the Grizzlies.

THE MAN at the center of ABC's *The Bachelor* knows his sports. **Aaron Buerge** was an all-state swimmer in high school, is an avid Chiefs fan and plans to open a sports bar with two 105-inch projection TVs next month in his native Springfield, Mo. But Buerge wasn't ready for the sports fanaticism he encountered upon visiting his date **Brooke Smith** and her family in Albertville, Ala., during the episode that aired last week. Brooke's stepfather, **John David**, gave Bruege a tour of his Alabama Room. The oversized crimson-and-white "museum," as Buerge calls it, is packed with Alabama football memorabilia, including a houndstooth hat worn by **Bear Bryant** and a copy of SI from the 1970s in which David appears in a photo of fans at a 'Bama game. Though Buerge jokingly called the shrine "a little spooky" on air, he told SI he was impressed. "It's neat that someone is so passionate about college football," Buerge says. "Going down there I was going to joke that I was an Auburn fan. I decided against it after seeing the 'Bama Room."

A 'Bama buss

■ Oscar and Felix together again? Stay tuned. Super welterweight champ **Oscar De La Hoya** and **Felix Trinidad** have agreed to meet for dinner in Puerto Rico in the near future. De La Hoya lives part time in Trinidad's native land and hopes to persuade Trinidad, who retired in July, to agree to a rematch. When the two fought in September 1999, Trinidad, now 29, won a disputed split decision. Says De La Hoya, also 29, "I want to hear [that he is retired] from his mouth."

■ If you think a Big Mac and fries make a good-looking pair, wait till you see the newest McDonald's doubles team. Tennis sisters **Venus** and **Serena Williams** have joined **Donald Trump**, **Cedric the Entertainer** and Latin star **Sofia Vergara** as McPitchmen. The sisters signed a three-year deal to do a series of ads that begins this month. They'll also appear on behalf of Ronald McDonald House Charities. Said Serena, "When we were kids going through a McDonald's drive-thru, picking up dinner on the way to practice, who'd have thought we'd be starring in a commercial with the **Hamburglar**."

■ An alleged conspiracy to kidnap ex–Spice Girl **Victoria Beckham**, the wife of British soccer star **David Beckham**, was foiled last week—with the help of the British tabloid *News of the World*. Acting on a tip from the paper, which said its undercover reporters had infiltrated a gang of art thieves who were planning to kidnap the former Posh Spice and hold her for ransom, Scotland Yard's Serious and Organized Crime Command unit arrested nine suspects. (Four were released.) "These people were serious, and that, of course, has scared the life out of me," Victoria Beckham said. "It is terrifying to think that someone would want to do that."

■ Redskins boss **Daniel Snyder** is hiring 10 coaches—but don't expect controversy. Snyder has launched the Redskins Youth Development program, which places academic coaches in D.C.-area public high schools. The coaches will help student-athletes land college scholarships. "We wanted to do something that wasn't just about athletics," Snyder says.

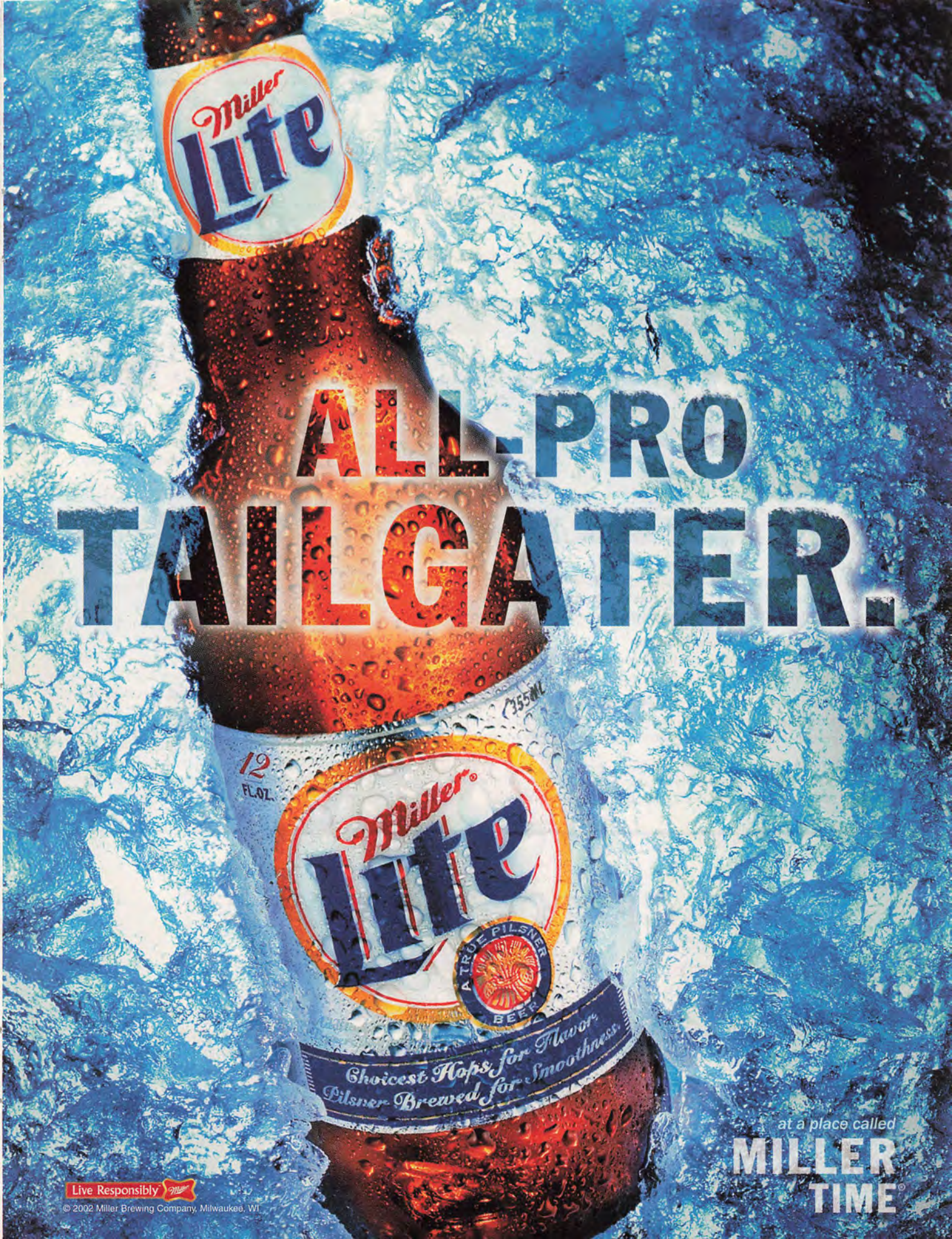
THIS WEEK'S SIGN OF THE APOCALYPSE

The Houston Aeros of the American Hockey League will give fans a free ticket if a fight does not break out in their Nov. 14 game against the Milwaukee Admirals.

« THEY SAID IT STEVE FRANCIS

Rockets point guard, on his similarities to teammate Yao Ming: "He's just like me—except he's 7' 6" and Chinese."

COURTESY OF ABC (THE BACHELOR); MICHAEL AINSWORTH (NELSONS); FERNANDO MEDINA/NBAE/GETTY IMAGES (FRANCIS)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THE WEEK IN TELEVISION

NOVEMBER 8 – 14

SATURDAY 11/9 > CBS 3:30 PM > **No. 2 Miami at Tennessee**
Sixteen years ago—in the only meeting between these college superpowers—the Vols dashed Miami's national title hopes with a 35–7 win in the Sugar Bowl.

SUNDAY 11/10 > ESPN 3 PM > **Oklahoma at Tennessee**
Women's hoops hits the floor with a meeting of two of last year's Final Four teams.

» DON'T MISS

TUESDAY 11/12 > HBO 10 PM

O.J.: A Study in Black and White
Tracking Simpson from his days as a record setter with USC and the Bills to his work as a fledgling corporate pitchman to the Trial of the Century, HBO examines his changing racial identity. The hourlong piece includes hard-hitting criticism from Hall of Famer Jim Brown.

On the "Fire Fight" set in '78

SUNDAY 11/10 > ESPN2 4 PM > **WTA Championships, Semifinals**
Serena Williams's Hollywood story continues: Fresh off her guest spot on ABC's *My Wife and Kids*, Little Sis closes her big year (winning three Grand Slam events) in L.A.

MONDAY 11/11 > ABC 9 PM > **Raiders at Broncos**
The Raiders are 34-18-1 on Monday, the league's best winning percentage on that night. But they've also lost five of their last six *MNF* matchups with the Broncos.

TUESDAY 11/12 > ESPN2 7 PM > **Harlem Globetrotters at Maryland**
No Meadowlark Lemon stuff here. This Globies club plays straight-up hoops—and includes several former college stars and former NBA player Cedric Ceballos.

WEDNESDAY 11/13 > ESPN 7 PM > **Spurs at Nets**
Last year's MVP (Tim Duncan) visits the guy who should have won the MVP (Jason Kidd). New Jersey was 2–0 against San Antonio last season.

UNDER REVIEW

With the NFL at midseason, we grade the Sunday-morning football shows.

▸**ESPN Sunday NFL Countdown** The set's overcrowded, but the mélange of strong personalities (Chris Berman, Tom Jackson, Bill Parcells, Sterling Sharpe and Steve Young) creates sharp debate and humorous moments. ("J-E-T-S, Just End The Season," Young cracked before New York upset the Chargers last week.) Add ace information man Chris Mortensen and strong reporters such as Andrea Kremer, Sal Paolantonio and Ed Werder, and *Countdown* remains the top destination for the football-obsessed fan. Grade: A

▸**FOX NFL Sunday** Landing Jimmy Johnson to join James Brown, Terry Bradshaw and Howie Long rates as the move of the year among the pregame shows. No analyst has a better command of the league. Fox overwhelms viewers with graphics, but the network often comes up with a creative gem, as it did on Sunday by using the classic kids' game Operation to diagram the Bucs' injury woes. The ratings leader remains a hoot to watch. Grade: B+

- Best of the Brunch
- Solid Operation
- Deion the Dummy

▸**CBS's The NFL Today** The pooh-bahs at CBS think Deion Sanders is the next great TV sports personality, which explains why so much of the show revolves around Deion's flashy outfits and Deion's interviewing subjects about Deion. Last week Deion, wearing a Michael Vick jersey, asked Vick who he thought the greatest Falcon was. (Now there's a relevant question.) Deion is loud and unfunny, a brutal combination unless you're a fan of Carrot Top. The capable Jim Nantz, Boomer Esiason and Dan Marino are also on this show. We think. C+ —R.D.

LANE STEWART

BACK-TO-BACK FLAK

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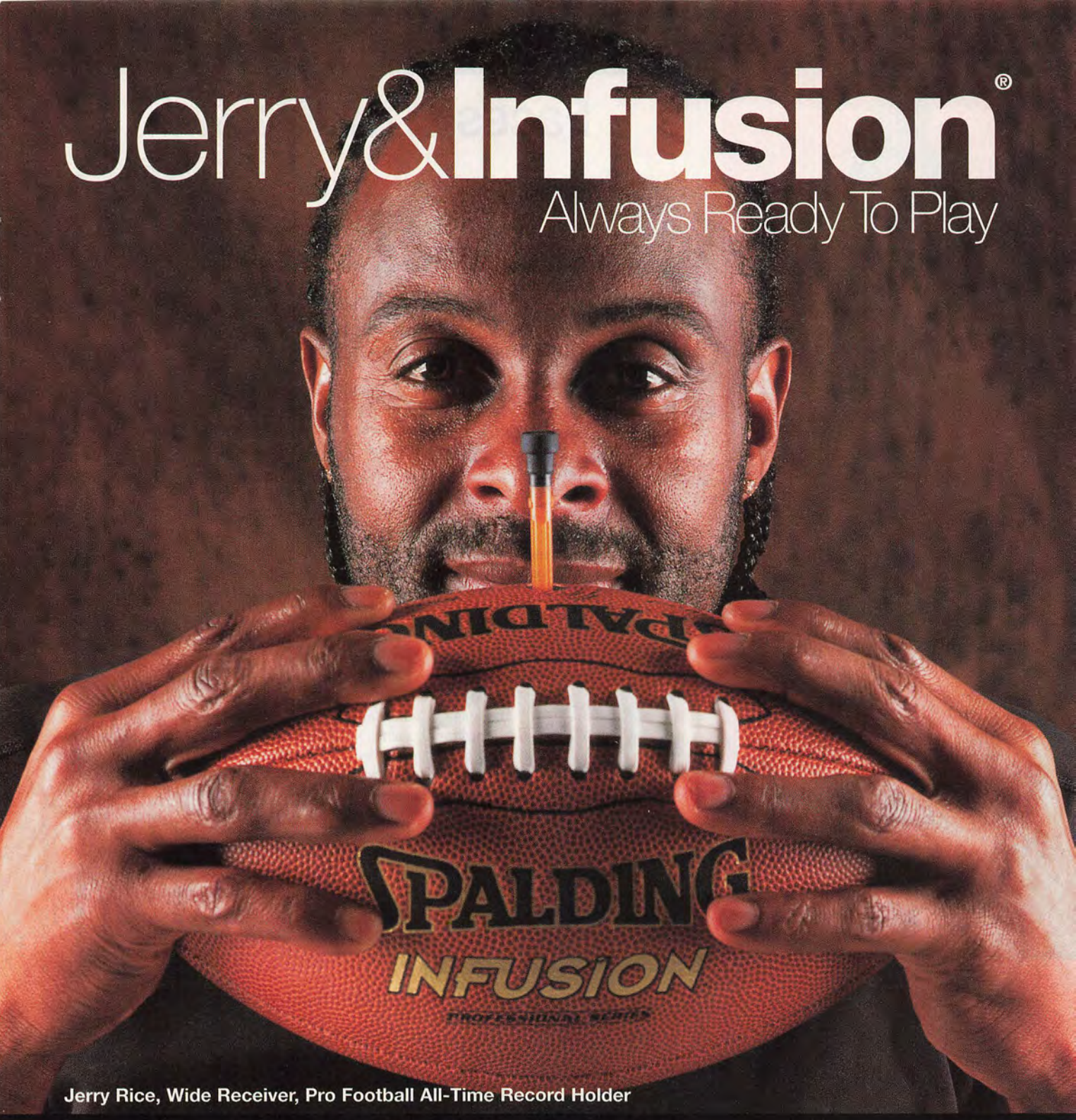

Jerry Rice, Wide Receiver, Pro Football All-Time Record Holder

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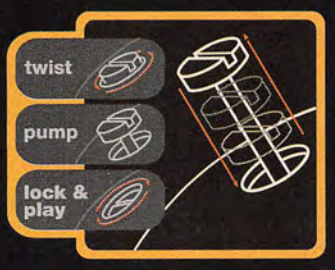

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Ford

Faces in the Crowd

Amy Dodson, ADRIAN, MICH.
Marathon
Dodson, 40, completed the St. George (Utah) Marathon in 3:53:24, lowering the world record for female below-the-knee amputees by more than 24 minutes. Dodson, a fifth-grade teacher, lost her left leg to cancer in 1983.

Paul Smith, OWASSO, OKLA.
Football
Paul, an Owasso High senior, broke the state career record for passing yards (7,402) during the school's fifth game of the season, a 49–14 win over Muskogee High. In that game Paul completed 17 of 27 passes for 438 yards and four touchdowns.

Jen Coleman, MADISON, WIS.
Badminton
Coleman, a UC Irvine sophomore, won the singles title at USA Badminton's junior nationals in Orange, Calif.; she also won titles in doubles and mixed doubles. She holds No. 1 rankings in all three events for the 22-and-under age group.

Trish Ladusaw, LOUISVILLE
Volleyball
Ladusaw, a senior at Cincinnati, set a Conference USA career record for digs when she hit her 1,843rd during a match against George Mason. A two-time conference player of the year, through Sunday she was averaging 4.86 digs per game.

Gordon Withers, IRVINE, CALIF.
Triathlon
Gordon, 15, won the 19-and-under division of the City of Los Angeles Triathlon, finishing the course (one-mile swim, 26-mile bike and 6.6-mile run) in 2:06:19. Earlier this year Gordon won the Carlsbad Triathlon in the 16-and-under group.

Amber Silvis, MOUNT ORAB, OHIO
Soccer
Amber, a senior at Western Brown High, became the leading girls' scorer in Ohio history when she made her 181st goal during a 2–1 win over Blanchester High. In her four seasons the school went 59-7-1 overall and 37–1 in Buckeye Conference play.

Mary Ellen Gordon, LILBURN, GA.
Tennis
Gordon, a junior at Emory, won the singles and doubles titles at the ITA National Championships. She became the fourth Division III player to sweep those events and the second to win two singles titles in her career. She also won the singles in 2000.

To submit a candidate for Faces in the Crowd, go to **cnnsi.com/faces.**

FROM TOP: KOBY MAROWELLI; TOM GILBERT; DEBORA ROBINSON; UC PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES; DEBORA ROBINSON; DENNY LANDWEHR; JON ROU

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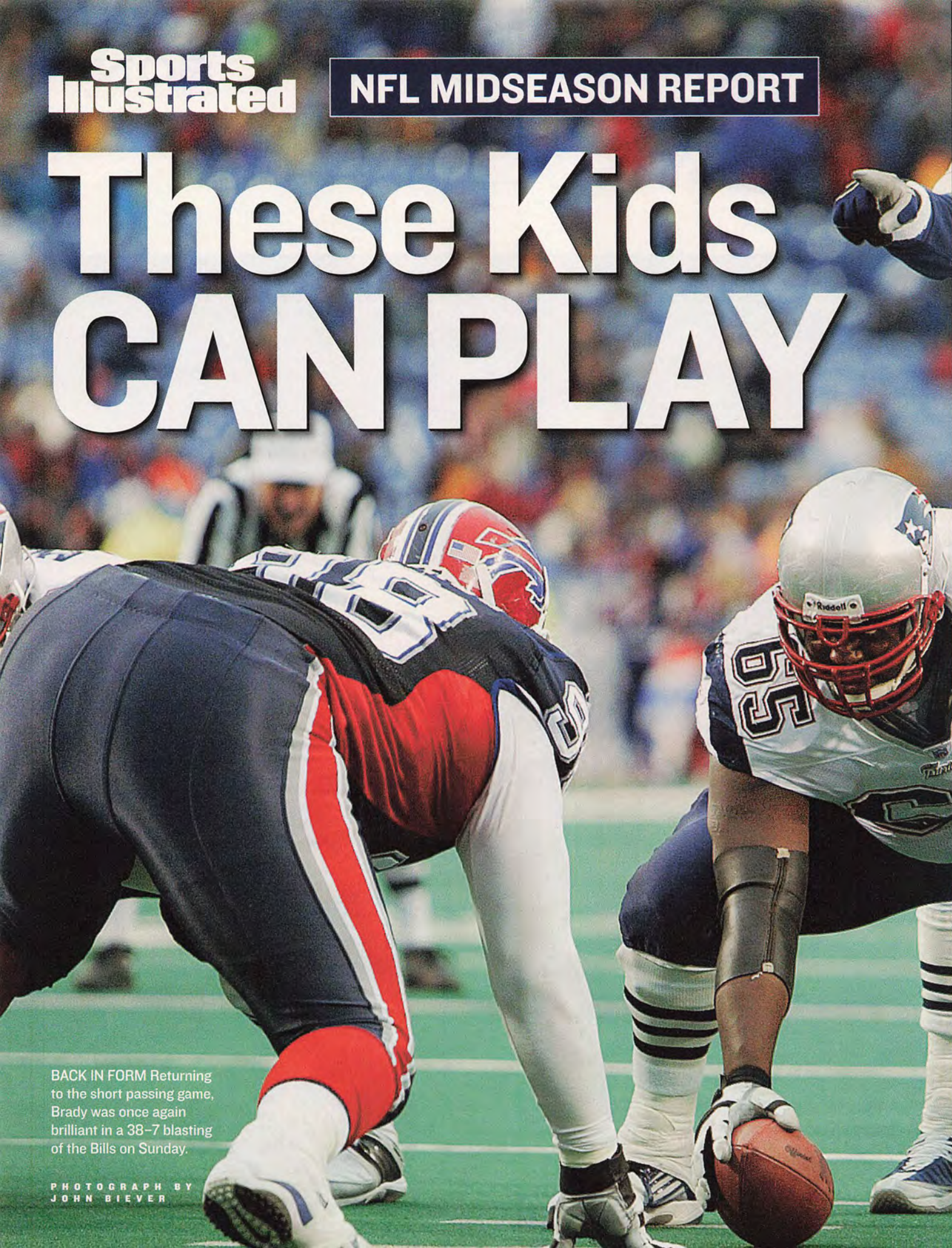
Sports Illustrated

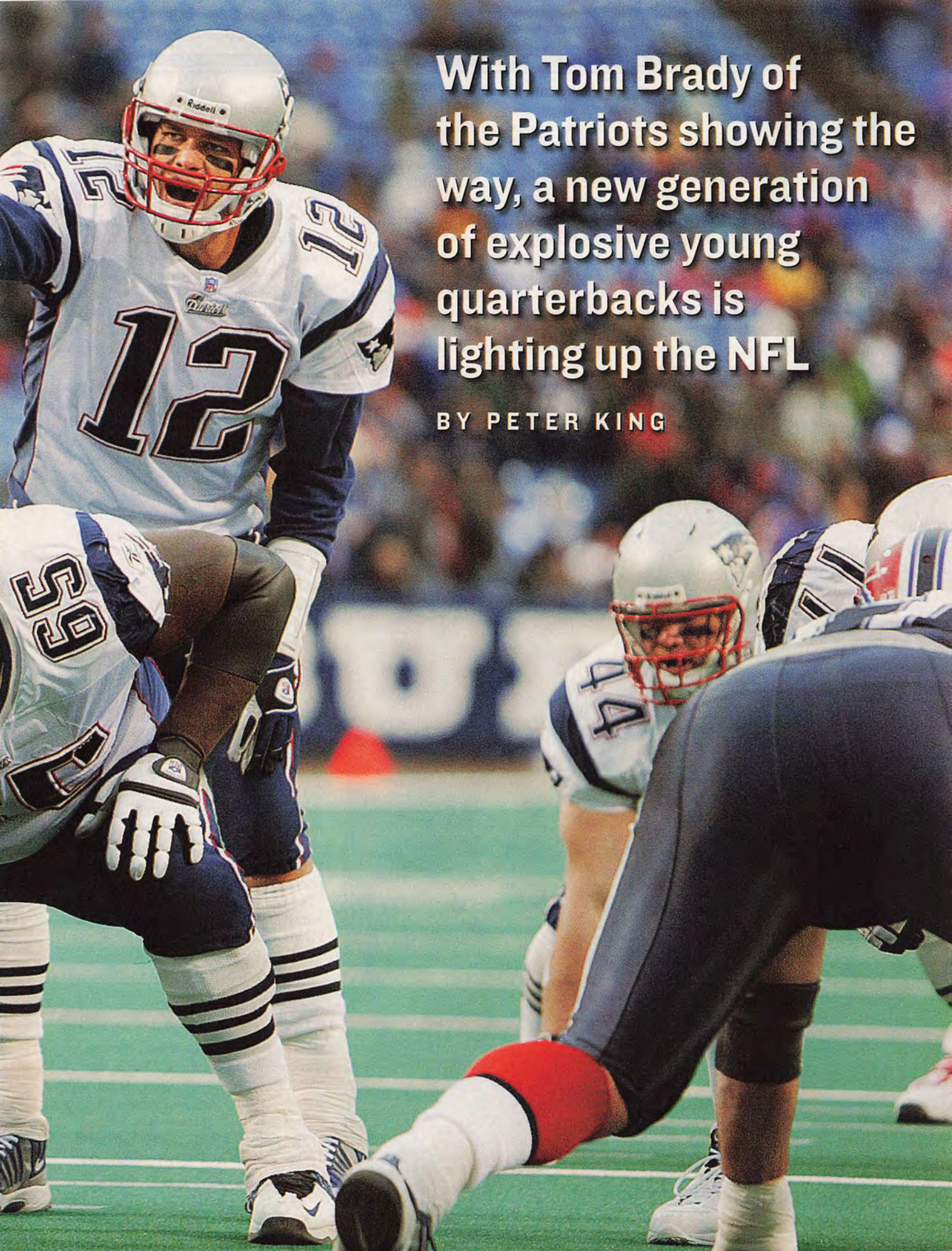
NFL MIDSEASON REPORT

These Kids CAN PLAY



BACK IN FORM Returning to the short passing game, Brady was once again brilliant in a 38–7 blasting of the Bills on Sunday.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN BIEVER



With Tom Brady of the Patriots showing the way, a new generation of explosive young quarterbacks is lighting up the NFL

BY PETER KING

MANAGING A young starting quarterback in the NFL is a balancing act. Very quickly, a coach must ascertain his passer's strengths and weaknesses; then, he has to formulate game plans that aren't so complex as to overload his student yet have enough variety to keep opponents off guard. All the while, the new leader of the offense has to remain focused on his weekly task while adjusting to the media attention, fame and fat contract that come with the job.

It's a seesaw experience, but once a coach and quarterback are in sync, the result can have the impact of a Barry Bonds homer into McCovey Cove. Consider, for instance, what the New England Patriots' 25-year-old Tom Brady accomplished on Sunday in a heavily hyped game against the Buffalo Bills and his former teammate Drew Bledsoe. Abandoning a wide-open pass attack for shorter throws and a stepped-up ground game, Brady had the most accurate passing day in club history, completing 23 of 27 attempts (85.2%) for 310 yards and four touchdowns in a 38–7 rout.

For the first time in more than a month the Patriots' offense was in perfect harmony, and it was because the New England coaches and Brady had returned to the notion of defining Brady's strength and revising the game plan accordingly.

In the first two months of the season offensive coordinator Charlie Weis used a spread offense with Brady doing his best Dan Fouts imitation. The defending Super Bowl champs bolted out of the gate, averaging 38.3 points during a 3–0 start. But then the offense stalled, and the Patriots dropped their next four games. That's when New England acknowledged that its quarterback couldn't carry the offense by himself, in the manner of a Fouts, a Dan Marino or a Brett Favre.

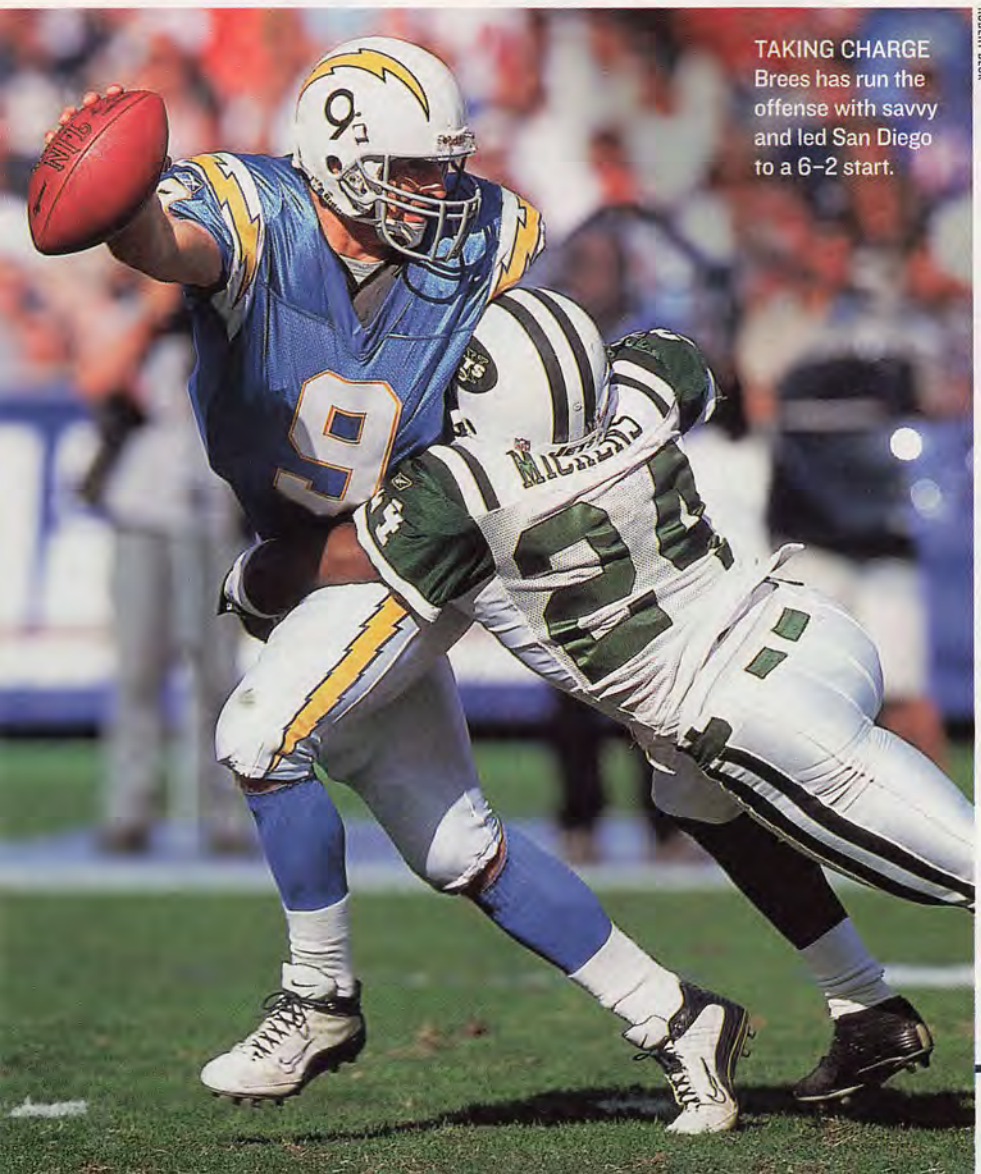
So against the Bills, in addition to throwing a lot of screens and dump-offs and flares, Brady handed off to running back Antowain Smith a season-high 29 times for 111 yards and a touchdown. Throwing the short stuff, Brady was 17 of 18 for 222 yards and three touchdowns, with no interceptions. "Those screens, in all honesty, don't work every week," Brady said on Monday. "But against this opponent, that's what kept working. If they hadn't, we'd have changed, and we had a bunch of different stuff in. Out of about 70 pass plays in the game plan, we had 15 that I'd never seen before. That's Charlie trying to put me in the best position not just every week, but every play."

The NFL is more reliant on young quarterbacks like Brady than at any other time in the last two decades. In a review of the league's starting quarterbacks at the midpoint of the past 20 seasons, the 17 current starters under age 28 constitute the largest number of such players in any season since 1983. (Last year 13 starting quarterbacks were under 28; in 2000, the number was 11.) In fact, not since the great quarterback draft of '83, when Marino and five other passers were drafted in the first round, have so many young QBs been handed the stewardship of their teams so early.

Among the 17 young starters, eight have fewer than three full seasons in the NFL. With Brady, the Atlanta Falcons' Michael Vick, the San Diego Chargers' Drew Brees, the Houston Texans' David Carr, the Detroit Lions' Joey Harrington and the New York Jets' Chad Pennington leading the charge, the new wave is surely here. Plus, inexperienced passers such as the St. Louis Rams' Marc Bulger and the Cleveland Browns' Kelly Holcomb have been impressive as stopgap injury replacements. "The Elways and Marinos are gone, but a bunch of young guys are stepping up," says Cowboys safety Darren Woodson, "and they're going to get better in a hurry."

Even Marino, now a CBS and HBO analyst, concedes that newly anointed franchise quarterbacks have it much tougher than he did. "Today a rookie is expected to be the savior of the franchise, because the franchise isn't very good," Marino says. "I came in with a Super Bowl team, and there's no way I saw the kind of exotic defenses that these quarterbacks see."

The first pick in the 1989 draft, former Dallas Cowboys All-Pro Troy Aikman, point-



TAKING CHARGE
Brees has run the offense with savvy and led San Diego to a 6–2 start.

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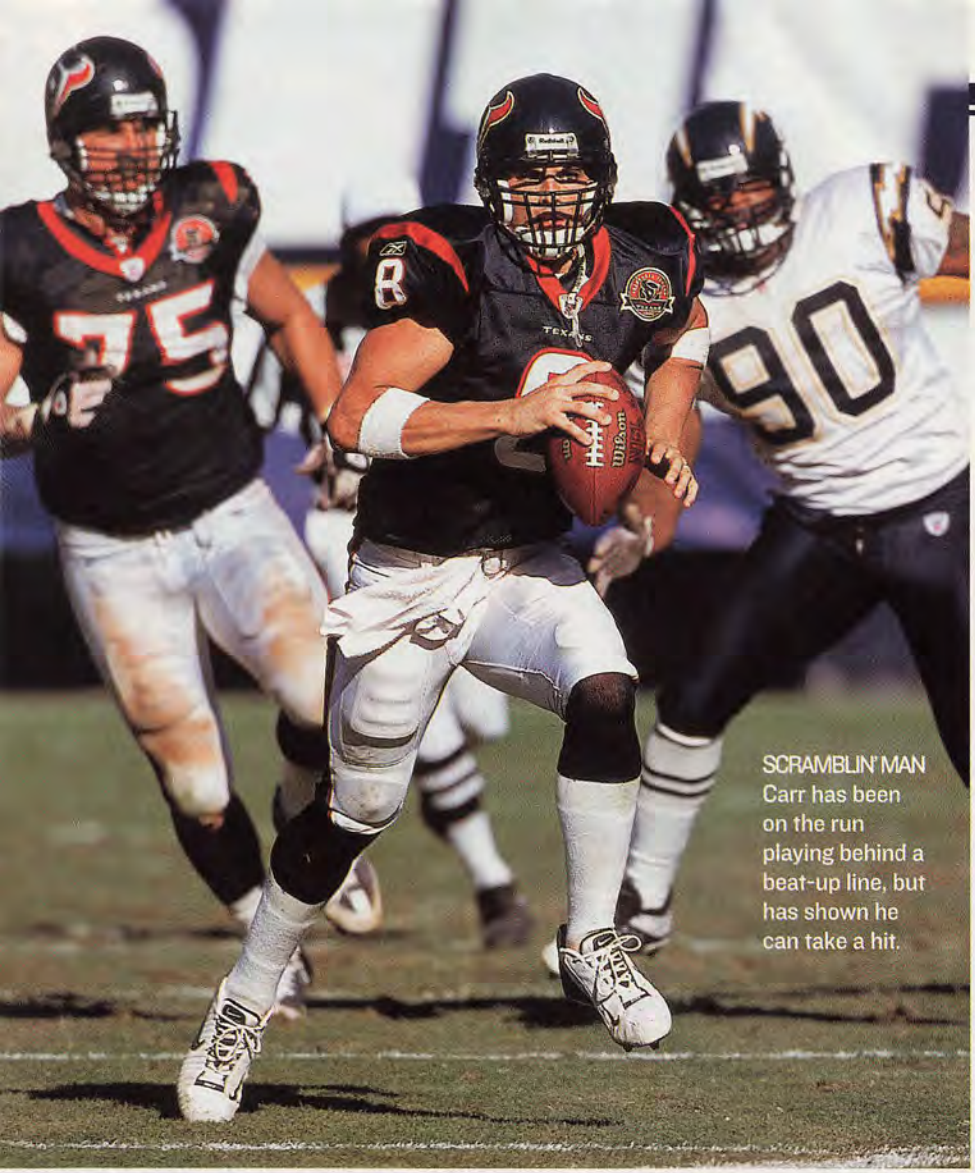

SCRAMBLIN' MAN Carr has been on the run playing behind a beat-up line, but has shown he can take a hit.

ed out to Brady a few weeks ago how times have changed. "Troy told me that when he started out, he had a wristband with 12 passes and six runs on it," Brady says. "Yesterday, on one play, I had three tight ends, a back and a wide receiver in the game, and on the next play it was five wides. So the game has changed dramatically for us."

These signal-callers not only have to prepare for what defenses throw at them, but also for what their teammates will think of a rich-kid leader in a locker room typically dominated by veterans. Pennington, for one, has been walking on eggshells for a month, ever since Jets coach Herman Edwards tabbed him to replace Vinny Testaverde, the slumping but highly respected veteran.

Says the Denver Broncos' 37-year-old backup quarterback, Steve Beuerlein, "The veteran pressure on a kid who has to step in and be a leader is huge. He comes into a locker room with guys a lot older than he is, and who are probably already giving him a hard time because he's making more money than they are. It's hard for him to get confidence in himself, and it's hard to generate confidence from those veterans. That's a relationship that evolves as everyone gets to know each other, but it's very hard for a guy to establish."

A sixth-round pick in 2000, Brady went from a player who was just happy to make the roster one year to a starter who was named Super Bowl MVP the next. That was hard enough in a locker room where the players so admired the veteran he replaced early in 2001, the injured Bledsoe. Then, in the off-season, Bledsoe was traded, and Brady, who had been making the NFL minimum, got a fat contract extension. When New England started to struggle this year, Brady's relationship with his teammates became rocky. He called out some unnamed Patriots after the fourth loss, a 24–16 defeat to the Broncos on Oct. 27. "It might need to be a little more important to them," he said at the time. "Maybe guys aren't playing like it's their livelihood." Several players took exception to Brady's comments.

"There's a fine line between being a leader and going overboard," Brady says. "As a young guy, you can't walk in and say, 'This is the way to do it.' Some veteran will say, 'Shut up. You've been here five minutes.' The thing about being a quarterback, no matter what age you are, is that you're not a custodian. You're the coach on the field. So even though it's tough sometimes, I don't give a crap that I'm 25. I'm a captain. I'm the quarterback. I'm going to say what I think."

In the balancing act that is life as a precocious NFL quarterback, you live and learn—mostly learn. Brady's performance on Sunday confirmed that he's settling into the full-time role. The other seven starting quarterbacks with three years or less of NFL experience are facing their own adjustments. SI asked scouts and personnel directors around the league for their midseason evaluations of these young guns (statistics are for each player's career).

Drew Brees

CHARGERS, 32nd pick in 2001

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
266	164	61.7	1,745	11	8	82.0

"He's a natural leader who has great moxie. That makes up for his biggest flaw, which is lack of arm strength. He gets himself out of a lot of jams with his feet, but I don't think he wants to run too much; he picks his spots. He's also so aware of what's happening that he'll be running toward the sideline, and at the last second he'll flip a pass to a guy for a 10-yard completion. He has great instincts, and he's very accurate. He also has a great running back [LaDainian Tomlinson] to take the pressure off him, which is the kind of setup that Marty Schottenheimer wants."

David Carr

TEXANS, First pick in 2002

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
207	107	51.7	1,387	7	8	68.2

"He's a tough son of a gun, has great arm strength and understands what's going on around him in the pocket. He can make all the throws, and when things break down, he doesn't hesitate to take off. He doesn't get much time to throw because their line

JOHN W. MCDONOUGH

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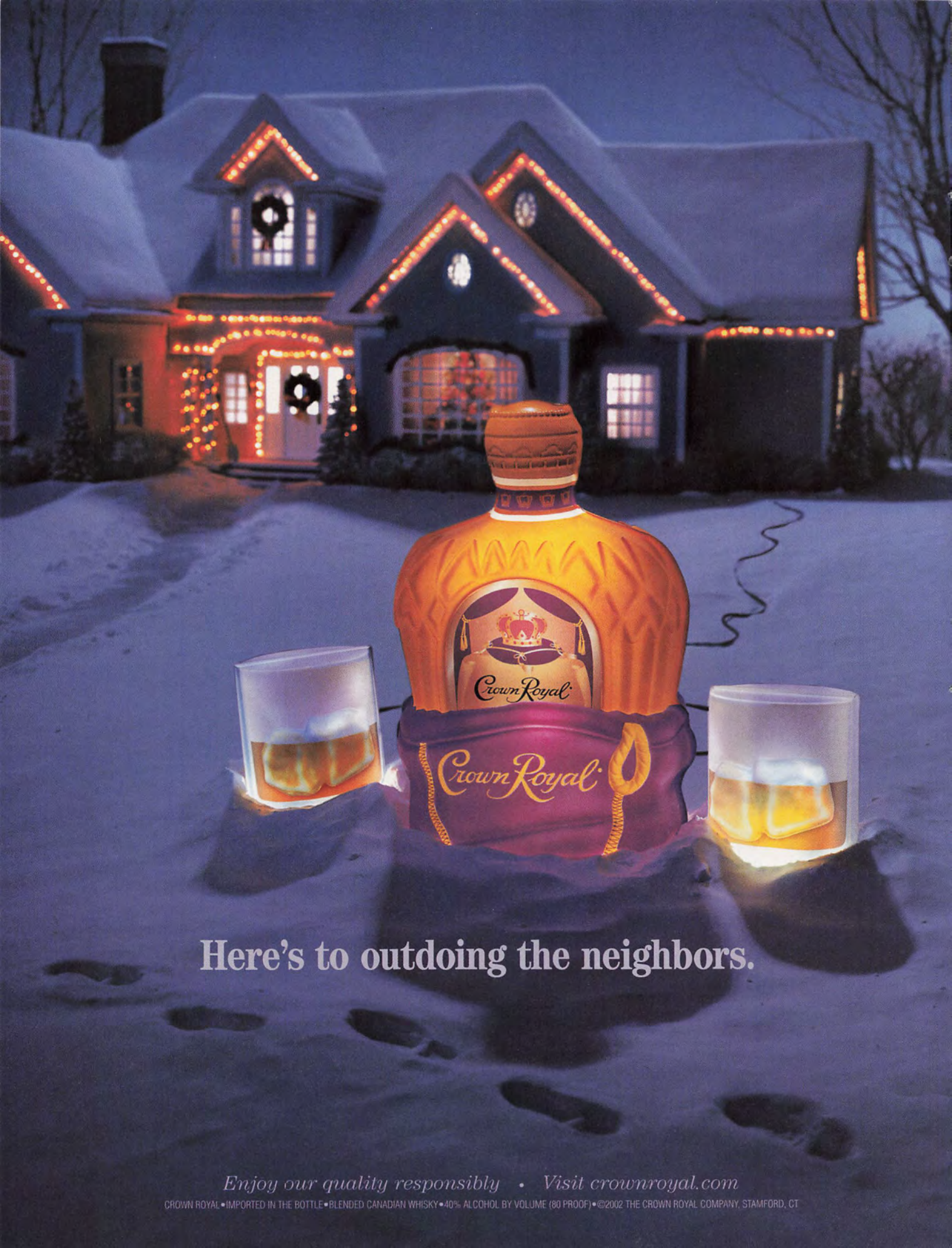

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is so beat up, but he has the size and the toughness to deal with that. He's not a movement guy like [Michael] Vick or [Donovan] McNabb, but he has enough athleticism that he can get out of trouble when he feels the pass rush. Like a lot of young guys, he'll make a bad throw into coverage, but that's part of the learning process."

Joey Harrington

LIONS, Third pick in 2002

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
233	117	50.2	1,312	6	9	59.9

"He's become such a leader for that team. You can tell by the way the Lions are playing how much confidence they have in Harrington *(page 44)*. You can see that he's comfortable running that offense. His mechanics are really impressive for a rookie, and his arm and accuracy are good. You can get to him with pressure because he doesn't always look comfortable on the run. He'll take chances with that arm [and force the ball into coverage]. Teams have bothered him by making adjustments during games, and he'll have to show that he can deal with it. He's getting better every week."

Chad Hutchinson

COWBOYS, 2002 free agent

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
63	34	54.0	353	1	0	75.7

"He has a very impressive arm—throws a good deep ball and has outstanding touch, especially for a guy who's been out of football for [four] years. Even though he's such a big quarterback, he's still mobile; he's got good feet and nice mechanics. He'll make bad decisions if you get pressure on him. And he'll hold the ball too long, but that's inexperience. Because he's been away from the game for so long, if you show him several looks and constantly change them throughout the game, he's going to be in trouble."

Chad Pennington

JETS, 18th pick in 2000

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
193	131	67.9	1,508	8	4	96.4

"I've liked him since he was in college. He has good accuracy and a nice release, but he's not very athletic. He'll scramble around and get tripped up pretty easily. Still, he's shown enough mobility to make tough throws on the run. He's a throwback, a classic drop-back passer. I've been really impressed with his accuracy on downfield throws. He sees the field very well and has a good feel for what the defense is throwing at him. He's done the little things that make life easier for his receivers. You don't see those guys having to make a lot of acrobatic catches to make plays. He usually puts the ball right where it needs to be."

Chris Redman

RAVENS, 75th pick in 2000

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
185	99	53.5	1,053	7	3	76.3

"He's not spectacular. His arm strength is good but not great. His best throws come between the hash marks. You can tell he's a student of the game and a leader. He doesn't have much mobility, but in that system they're not asking him to make plays with his feet. They only want him to avoid a lot of mistakes, and he's done a good job of that."

Michael Vick

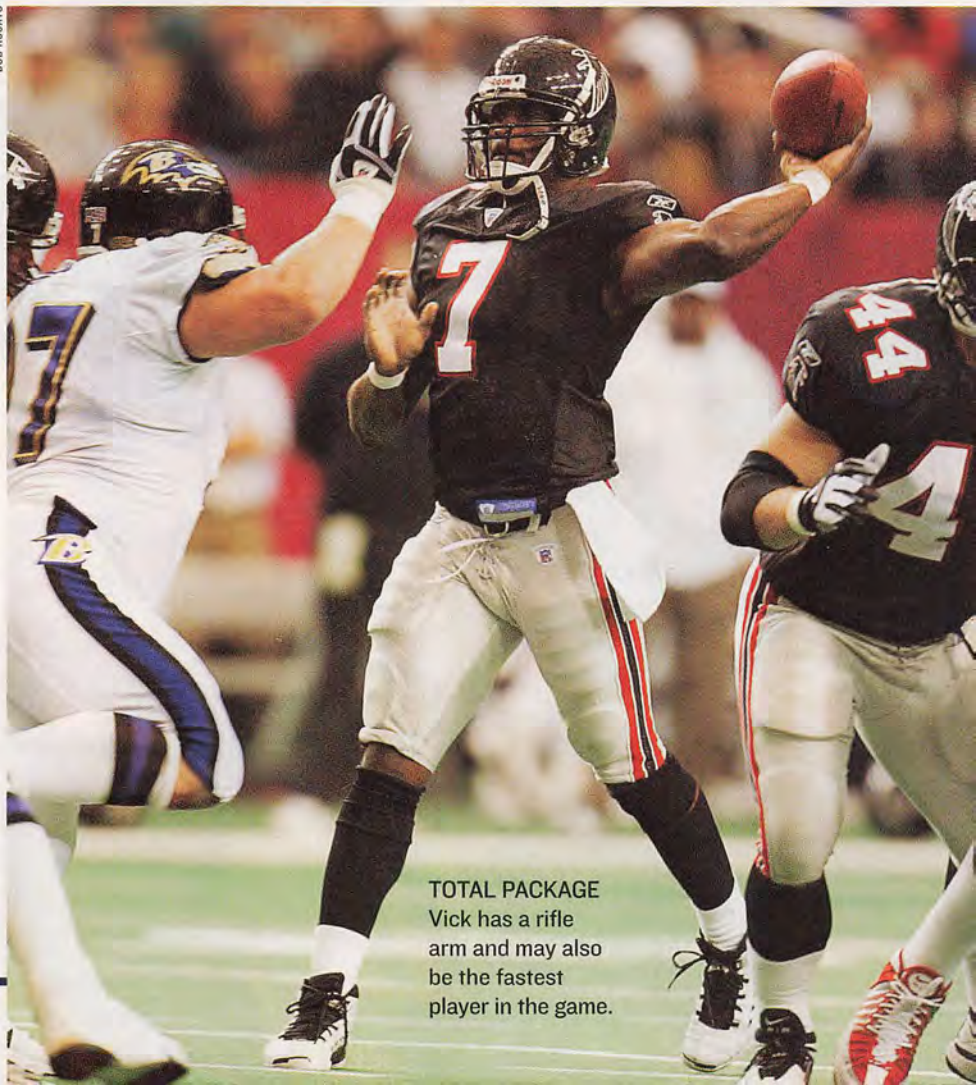
FALCONS, First pick in 2001

Att.	Comp.	Pct.	Yds.	TDs	Int.	Rating
272	146	53.7	1,880	6	4	76.8

"He has the prettiest release, and he puts a lot of velocity on his throws. I haven't been around Brett Favre, but I can't think of a quarterback with a stronger arm than Vick's. I also don't think there's anyone in the NFL faster than him. They like to use him on sweeps and draws, and there's no scarier sight than watching him running down the field. The guy made some plays against us that left our players mesmerized. Atlanta doesn't appear to be holding him back. He's running everything in Dan Reeves's offense, and he's not making many mistakes." □

Read Peter King's Monday Morning Quarterback at **cnnsi.com/football.**

BOB ROSATO



TOTAL PACKAGE
Vick has a rifle arm and may also be the fastest player in the game.

PASSING LANE With Harrington in charge, Detroit has already surpassed its win total of 2001.

Detroit's DARLING

Rookie Joey Harrington has all the tools—the talent, the toughness and the moxie—to bring real hope to the fans of the long-lost Lions

BY MICHAEL SILVER

His palms are sweaty,
Knees weak, arms are heavy.
There's vomit on his sweater already,
Mom's spaghetti . . .
—Eminem, from his hit song *Lose Yourself*

HE'S A PROMISING kid in a pitiless pressure cooker, his every move scrutinized, his every fit and start entwined with the Motor City's fragile identity. No, we're not talking about platinum-selling rapper Eminem. Shattering hip-hop stereotypes may be daunting, but try being Detroit Lions rookie quarterback Joey Harrington each Sunday, staring down stage fright *and* quick, vicious, 300-pound dudes who can bench-press you and one of your kid brothers at the same time.

Is it any surprise that midway through his impressive debut season, Harrington, despite his subdued musical tastes (he longs to jam with Dave Matthews, and he recently attended a James Taylor concert), hopes to hook up with Detroit's other scorching-hot property? "I'd love to meet Eminem," Harrington said last week, slamming his bottle of water onto a table at the Lions' Allen Park training facility for emphasis. "He's the man around here."

Slim Shady, say "What up?" to Slim Savior: In a city always looking for pop-culture icons, in a sport always eager to anoint the Next Elway, Harrington, an accomplished pianist, carries the weight of his great-grandmother's restored 1911 Baldwin on his shoulder pads. When the Lions, coming off a 2–14 season, suffered blowout losses in each of their first two games this year with Mike McMahon at quarterback, coach Marty Mornhinweg went against his better instincts and gave the ball to Harrington, the third pick in the 2002 draft.

Detroit has hung in each of its six games since Harrington took over, winning three, including Sunday's 9–7 victory over the Dallas Cowboys at Ford Field. Though Harrington's performance wasn't pretty—he completed just 14 of 33 passes for 104 yards and threw two interceptions—he showed the poise that marked his stellar career at Oregon, during which he produced 10 fourth-quarter comebacks in 28 career starts. This time Harrington's 12-yard pass

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID BERGMAN

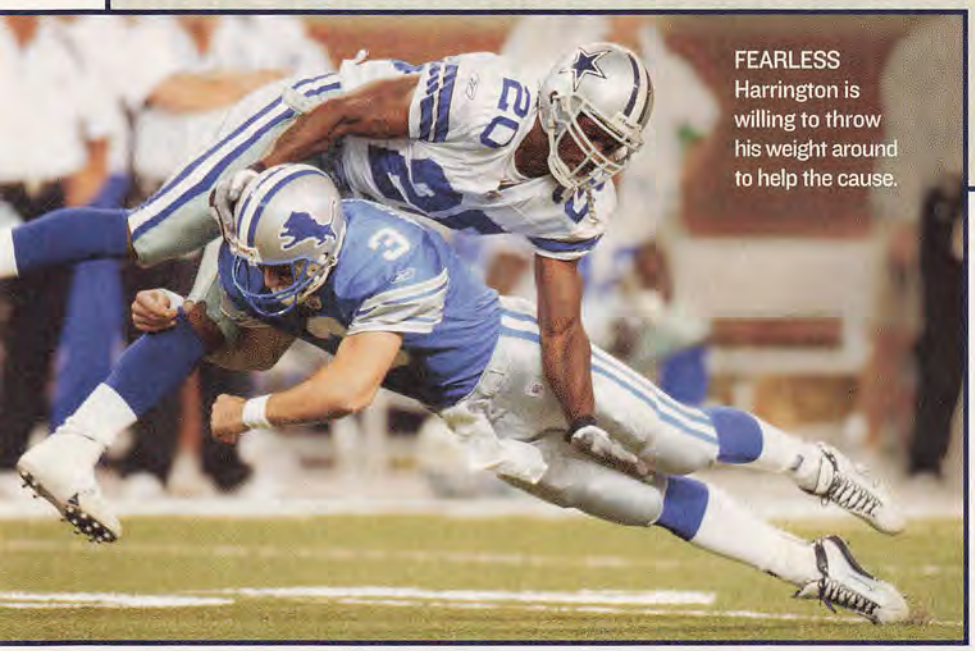
MIND Game

Want to be a quarterback? Here's what Harrington goes through on one play

JOEY HARRINGTON learned to read music at age five, and he's thinking about taking a Latin class this spring at Michigan, but right now he's fully immersed in the language of the West Coast offense. Here, courtesy of Lions quarterbacks coach Kevin Higgins, is what has to happen inside Harrington's head during the execution of a single play:

"As soon as the previous play ends, the clock starts in Joey's mind. The first thing we want him to do is to start anticipating the play he thinks Marty [Mornhinweg, the coach] will call. At the same time, his eyes are getting a feel for the personnel group we're sending in. Let's say it's second-and-five, and Marty calls Pass 317 X Slant. He gives the call to [third-string quarterback] Ty Detmer, who relays it to Joey over the communication system in his helmet. The call tells Joey this: We're faking a run, 17-power, to the halfback and then trying to throw a slant to the split end. He should notice that our base personnel group [two wideouts, two backs and a tight end] is in the game and figure out that we'd only run that play out of a 'red left' formation. He's at liberty to choose the snap count. Now he's ready to relay the call in the huddle: 'Red Left Pass 317 X Slant, hard count on three.' He also might give a reminder to someone in the huddle: Say he tells the split end, 'Make sure the DB has outside leverage so you can beat him inside.'

"Now we break the huddle, and he comes to the line. He surveys the defense with what we call 'first wide vision.' He checks that our formation is aligned correctly and gets a feel for the coverage and front he's facing. His eyes are staring down the middle of the field so he won't give away anything to the defense, and he's watching to see how the linebackers are playing—will they bite on the play fake so that the receiver will be open when he breaks inside? Then he goes to 'second wide vision': Will any other defender be in the area to screw up the route? Now he's ready to take the snap. He fakes to the running back as he's dropping back. On his third step he's ready to throw to the X [split end]. If the X is covered, now he has to reset his feet and look for the Z [flanker] on a post. The third read is the halfback. Hopefully, though, he gets the ball to the X, we get the first down, and then the clock in Joey's head starts again." —M.S.



FEARLESS Harrington is willing to throw his weight around to help the cause.

to halfback James Stewart set up Jason Hanson's game-winning, 43-yard field goal with 48 seconds remaining. "He didn't do much today, but trust me, this guy is going to be a damn good quarterback," Cowboys safety Darren Woodson said after the game. "He reminds me a little of Brett Favre: He doesn't have to set his feet when he slings it to get the ball where it needs to go."

In throwing Harrington to the Lions, and the Lions to Harrington, Mornhinweg brought hope and hype to a franchise that last had a marquee quarterback when Edsels cruised up 8 Mile Road. "We've had one quarterback get to the Pro Bowl [Greg Landry in 1972] since *this guy*," Mornhinweg said last week, gesturing behind his desk to a photo of Bobby Layne, who starred for the team from 1950 through '58. "You can understand our fans' frustrations. So many rookie quarterbacks have gone down the slippery slope, and there's an extreme amount of pressure on them from so many directions. I know there have been times where he's felt like it's all on his shoulders."

Harrington's deft handling of the burden has been a striking and welcome development in a league that chews up and spits out precocious young passers. Some rookies, including former Lions quarterback Charlie Batch in '98, have had their share of success, but in the last three decades only Dan Marino of the '83 Miami Dolphins began with a bang and built on his early stardom. Though Harrington had a choppy starting debut in a 37–31 loss to the Green Bay Packers, throwing four interceptions in the Sept. 22 opening of the team's sparkling new dome in downtown Detroit, the Lions rallied from a 17-point deficit and nearly won that game, as they almost did in two of his subsequent road outings.

On Sunday, Harrington won his third consecutive home start, driving the Lions 38 yards in eight plays to set up Hanson's game-winner. It doesn't sound like much, but give the rookie credit for staying cool at the game's pivotal moment. The Lions faced fourth-and-three from the Dallas 43 with 1:54 to go when Mornhinweg went with Brown Left 51 Halfback Read X Dagger. The play called for Stewart to read the coverage and break inside or outside for a quick flare while wideout Bill Schroeder ran an in pattern behind him. The Cowboys blitzed two players from the strong side and dropped a defensive end into coverage. Harrington instantly recognized the coverage and determined that Stewart would break to the outside, and he zipped the ball to the halfback for a 12-yard gain. Said Mornhinweg, "To struggle through the game and then connect on that fourth-down pass, it shows he's got a little something."

The result is that in Detroit, exasperation has given way to anticipation. Virtually everyone in the organization, from team president Matt Millen to longtime

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NFL veterans like guard Ray Brown and cornerback Eric Davis, is convinced the Lions have found their leader—and they are not alone.

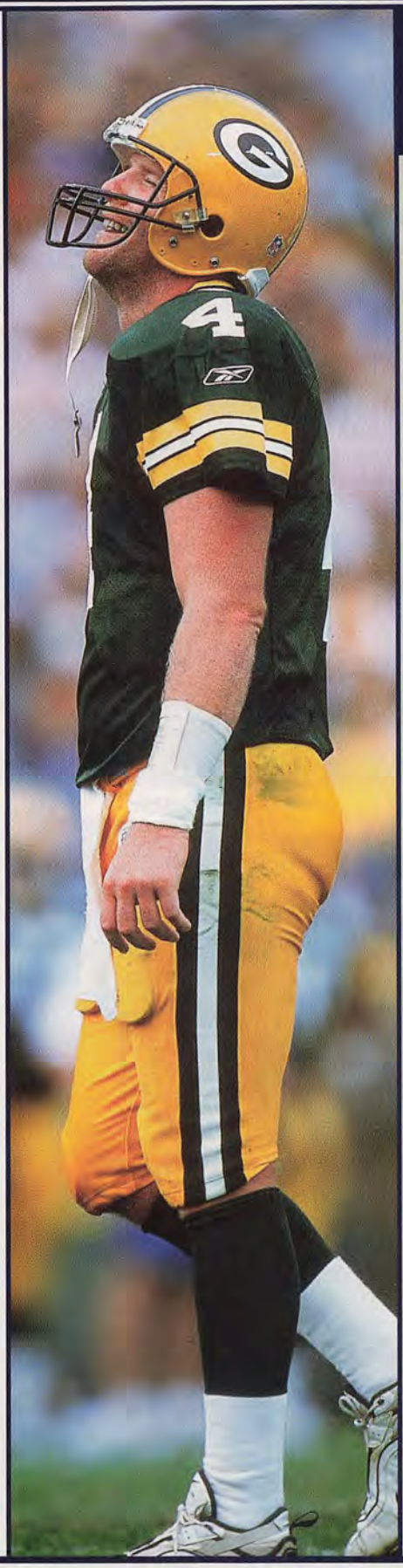
"I think he's going to be a *great* quarterback," says coach Jim Haslett of the 6–2 New Orleans Saints, who suffered their first loss at Harrington's hands on Sept. 29. "The thing that got me was how poised he was when he was getting hit. We pounded him, but nothing rattled the guy."

The 6' 4", 220-pound Harrington, who turned 24 last month, claims to be a shy, withdrawn homebody who doesn't have the nerve to start up a conversation with an unfamiliar woman. In a football context, however, he is bold and confident. Ask him if his rookie responsibilities—learning a new offense with complex terminology, asserting himself in the presence of older teammates, handling off-field commitments—are more daunting than he expected, and he smiles and shakes his head no. "I feel really good," he says. "Football is what I love, and I know I can do it, too. I *know* I can play in this league, and not having to wonder about that helps keep me calm."

Harrington's breezy confidence has generated excitement in the Lions' locker room and has won over teammates. "I've been around young quarterbacks who get so freaked out that you can see the whites of their eyes, but not this guy," says guard Tony Semple, a nine-year veteran. "He's so relentlessly positive and has such a passion for the game that it's a pleasure to block for him." Fellow guard Brown, a 15-year veteran, played for Washington in '94 when the Redskins brought in Heath Shuler with the third pick in the draft. "Joey's not in over his head like Heath was," Brown says. "He's not overwhelmed by this. Before the opening kickoff against New Orleans he sidled up to me and told me a joke."

Davis, a cornerback in his 13th year, compares Harrington's demeanor with that of former San Francisco 49ers teammate Steve Young. "Joey's a special player," Davis says. "He wants to perfect everything he does. He's always pulling me aside during practice, saying, 'How did you know I was going to throw that way?' or 'What can I do to sell that fake?' "

Of all the qualities a quarterback can possess, none captivates a team like toughness—and Harrington has that, too. "We were playing the Bears, and Brian Urlacher put a nice hit on him near the sideline," Brown says. "Joey got up and patted



JOHN BIEVER

Midseason ALL-PRO TEAM

IN THE 45-year history of the NFL Most Valuable Player award, only one man, Packers quarterback Brett Favre *(left)*, has won it more than twice. Favre was MVP in 1995 and '96 and shared the honor with Barry Sanders in '97. According to a panel of 16 scouts and personnel directors, Favre is on his way to a fourth MVP. With 15 touchdown passes and only four interceptions in Green Bay's 7–1 start, Favre last week received the votes of nine panel members. Chiefs running back Priest Holmes received four votes, Bills quarterback Drew Bledsoe two and Eagles quarterback Donovan McNabb one. In a separate vote befitting this strange NFL season, Bledsoe was named the midseason All-Pro quarterback over Favre 8–7 by the same panel. Here is the complete lineup and other award winners.

POS.	PLAYER, TEAM	VOTES
	OFFENSE	
WR	Eric Moulds, *Bills*	14
WR	Terrell Owens, *49ers*	7
TE	Tony Gonzalez, *Chiefs*	15
T	Jon Ogden, *Ravens*	14
T	Lincoln Kennedy, *Raiders*	3
G	Will Shields, *Chiefs*	11
G	Alan Faneca, *Steelers*	5
C	Matt Birk, *Vikings*	5
QB	Drew Bledsoe, *Bills*	8
RB	Priest Holmes, *Chiefs*	8½
FB	Tony Richardson, *Chiefs*	4
	DEFENSE	
E	Trevor Pryce, *Broncos*	12
E	Jason Taylor, *Dolphins*	10
T	Warren Sapp, *Bucs*	12
T	Kris Jenkins, *Panthers*	4
OLB	Derrick Brooks, *Bucs*	13
OLB	Joey Porter, *Steelers*	8
MLB	Brian Urlacher, *Bears*	7
CB	Patrick Surtain, *Dolphins*	5
CB	Chris McAlister, *Ravens*	5
FS	Brian Dawkins, *Eagles*	13
SS	Lawyer Milloy, *Patriots*	4

AWARDS

MVP
Brett Favre, *Packers*, 9

COACH
Marty Schottenheimer, *Chargers*, 9½

EXECUTIVE
Tom Donahoe, *Bills*, 4

OFFENSIVE ROOKIE
Clinton Portis, running back, *Broncos*, 7

DEFENSIVE ROOKIE
Julius Peppers, end, *Panthers*, 14

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him on the ass, like, I'm coming back, fool." Harrington brought the Lions from behind in that game too, directing a 12-play, 72-yard drive in the last 2:21 to set up the tying field goal. Detroit won 23–20 in overtime.

If, on Sundays, Harrington is free to lose himself in the moment, the rest of the week presents different pressures. Like most rookies, Harrington has been waylaid by the grind of a season that counting preseason games can be almost twice as long as the typical college campaign. "I'm learning just how long it is right now," he says. "I'm tired. But it's a good tired."

He apparently doesn't expend a lot of energy off the field. "It's true; we sit around the dinner table eating spaghetti and sounding like our dads," says Harrington's longtime friend Steve Bramucci, an aspiring screenwriter who is living in the quarterback's condo. And Harrington remains fiercely protective of his privacy. "I was in a drugstore a while back," he says, "and when they were ringing up my items, the checker asked for my phone number. I said no, and it caused a scene. I said, 'I don't think I should have to give you my phone number to make a purchase here,' and she said, 'Yes, you do.' The manager ended up

Champs or CHUMPS?

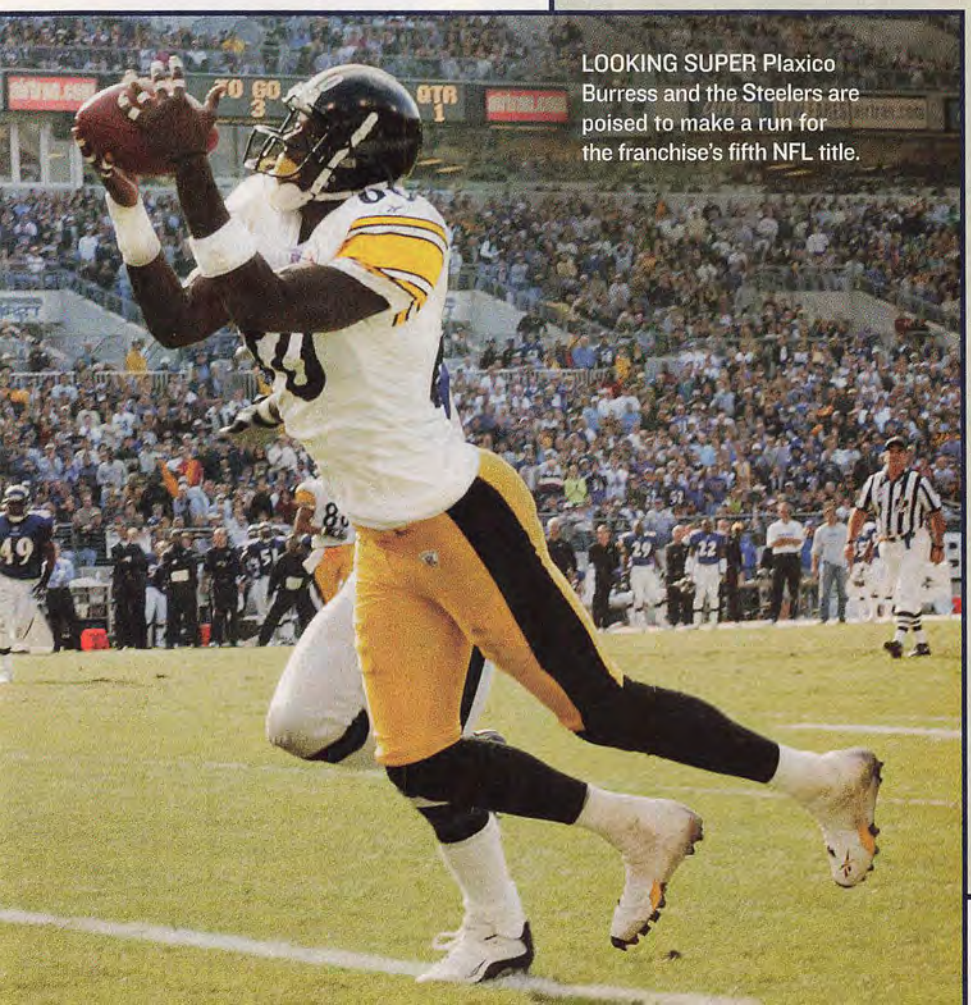
Realignment's worst nightmare: An 8–8 division winner could go to the playoffs while a 10–6 wild card stays home

IF THE rise of the young quarterback was the story of the first half of the 2002 season, brace for the prospect of a controversy in the second half. When the NFL realigned its six divisions into eight in May 2001 and kept the playoff pool at 12 teams, the number of wild-card entries per conference was reduced from three to two. That move increased the chances that a mediocre division champ—the AFC South winner, for instance, might have only eight wins this year—could make the playoffs while a 10- or 11-win team misses out.

Yet even if a playoff-worthy team is jilted, the postseason format will not be adjusted for '03. "When we put this system in, we said we were going to give it two years," says Rich McKay, the Bucs' general manager and co-chair of the NFL competition committee. "We knew some anomalies could occur."

Some teams aren't happy to hear that. "Think of what a nightmare it would be," says Chiefs pro personnel director Bill Kuharich, "if an 8–8 team gets in and a 10–6 team doesn't—and that 10–6 team beat the 8–8 team during the season."

According to league sources, NFL owners considered two other options. Number 1: Expand the pool to 14 teams, play three games in each conference on the first playoff weekend and give the team with the best record in each conference a bye. This option was rejected because of fears that it would be seen as watering down the playoffs the way other sports have. Number 2: Award the six playoff spots in each conference to the teams with the best records. "Who cares who wins the NFC West or the AFC South?" says Rams general manager Charley Armey. "What we should care about is that our best teams make the playoffs." But that proposal fizzled because of the premium the league places on winning a division. —*Peter King*



LOOKING SUPER Plaxico Burress and the Steelers are poised to make a run for the franchise's fifth NFL title.

BOB ROSATO

PROJECTED PLAYOFF LINEUP

AFC

DIVISION CHAMPS
1. Steelers (12–4); 2. Broncos (11–5); 3. Dolphins (10–6); 4. Titans (8–8)

WILD CARDS
5. Chargers (10–6); 6. Patriots (10–6)

WILD-CARD ROUND
Chargers 18, Titans 10; Dolphins 21, Patriots 9

DIVISIONAL ROUND
Steelers 24, Chargers 16; Broncos 16, Dolphins 13

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME
Steelers 27, Broncos 24

NFC

DIVISION CHAMPS
1. Eagles (12–4); 2. Packers (12–4); 3. Bucs (12–4); 4. 49ers (11–5)

WILD CARDS
5. Saints (11–5); 6. Falcons (9–7)

WILD-CARD ROUND
49ers 36, Saints 20; Bucs 19, Falcons 17

DIVISIONAL ROUND
49ers 25, Eagles 20; Packers 12, Bucs 10

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME
Packers 30, 49ers 28

SUPER BOWL XXXVII
Steelers 31, Packers 30

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putting *his* phone number into the system."

There is no shortage of female fans who'd love to get Harrington's digits, but he swears dating isn't a priority right now. "I don't have time," he says. "That's something I can worry about later on, when I get a handle on this offense." Besides, Harrington says, when it comes to dealing with the opposite sex, "I'm awful. Awful. I'm just terrible."

Pardon those of us who aren't young, handsome, rich (he has a six-year, $36.5 million deal) and bound for stardom while we express our skepticism. "It reminds me of Sylvester the Cat with Tweety Bird feathers in his teeth," says Harrington's father, John, a high school principal in Portland. "He appears to have *a lot* of friends who are girls. During football he has never had the time, but he seems to make up for it in the off-season. Besides, how does a guy who can't talk to girls end up in *Cosmo*?"

Ah, yes, the infamous *Cosmopolitan* photograph. In the magazine's November issue, Harrington is featured as one of the 50 "Hottest Hunks in the U.S.," espousing his regard for "great-smelling" women, "soft cheeks" and vanilla bean ice cream. It wasn't quite Ricky Williams posing in a wedding dress, but there was plenty of locker room fallout. "It's easy to pick on a guy who seems like a perfect kid," Semple says. "I'm calling him 'Cool Sharp Hollywood.' "

Speaking of which, that inevitable rendezvous with Eminem beckons, if only to settle the debate over which performer is the true darling of Detroit. "Those are the two biggest guys in town right now," Bramucci says, "and somehow or some way, they've got to meet."

If it happens, the kid confesses he might get a little nervous chatting with the rapper. But you won't see those nerves on the football field. "I'm not there yet by any means," Harrington says, "but I *know* I can play with these guys."

In other words, don't expect to see any of mom's spaghetti on his jersey. □

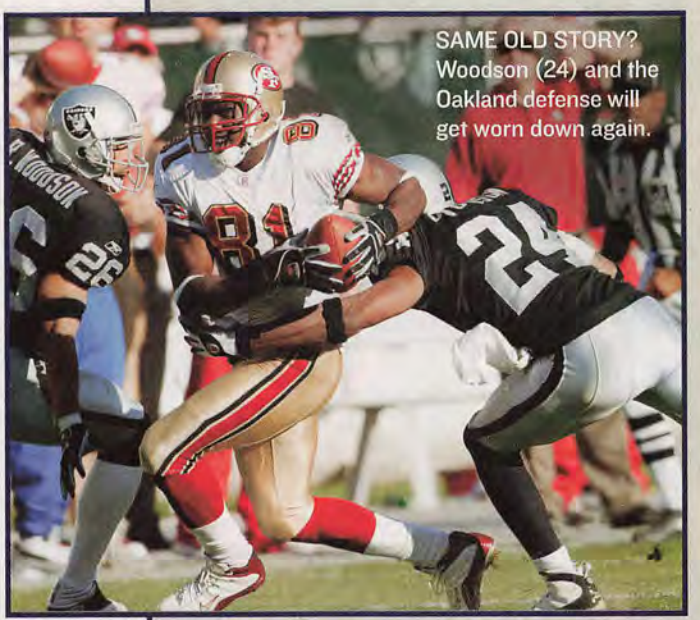
Read Open Mike by Michael Silver every week at **cnnsi.com/si_online.**

WEEK 10

DR. Z's Forecast

Working overtime is just one of the factors going against the Raiders in Denver

TEAMS THAT played in an overtime game haven't done well the week after. Their record is 4–15, not counting games against opponents who were also coming back from OT. Fatigue, mental strain, typical letdown—any of them could be contributing factors, or maybe all of them. Two teams have come back from overtime games to play an opponent coming off its bye—the Browns, who against the Steelers went into overtime again before losing, and the Titans, who got clobbered 52–25 by the Raiders.



SAME OLD STORY? Woodson (24) and the Oakland defense will get worn down again.

These are the statistical handicaps Oakland faces when it plays in Denver on Monday night. What's worse is the nature of the Raiders' overtime loss to San Francisco on Sunday. Their defense was worn down after the 49ers ran off the last 30 plays in the game. How long the effects of the fatigue will last, especially against the rested Broncos, who are coming off their bye week, remains to be seen.

Here are some more bad statistics for Oakland fans. In his seven years as Denver coach, Mike Shanahan has made the game against the Raiders, who fired him once upon a time, a personal crusade. He has never lost at home in seven meetings.

This, of course, will all be well-documented during the week, and the Broncos will read it. If they take it too seriously, they could lose some of their edge. I'm groping here. I'm trying to find a way the Raiders can squeeze out a victory. But I don't think they're going to stop Denver, not with the way their secondary looked against San Francisco. Cornerback Charles Woodson, coming back from a broken right shoulder, struggled. The Broncos will put him to the test, and they'll put up points. Defensively, I think Denver will use a minimum of nickel and dime coverages against Oakland's three-wide package. The Broncos' linebackers are quick enough to lock onto the short crossing routes, and they're better equipped than defensive backs to inflict punishment. **Denver's the pick.**

Here's another game that will test the bye-versus-OT-survivor theory. The Niners play host to rested Kansas City, and they'd better watch out. The Chiefs can score, and their defense is better than it was a month ago. Do I sense an upset here? Well, almost, but I can close my eyes and see Terrell Owens waltzing through the K.C. secondary for about 150 yards. **The Niners are the pick,** just barely.

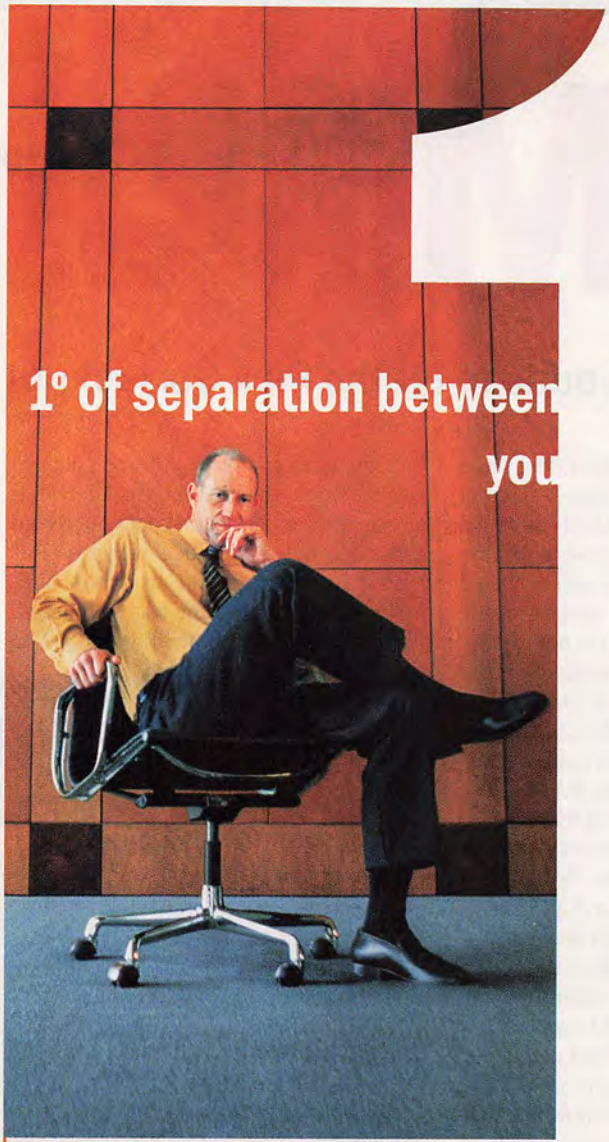
The rampaging Jets face Miami at the Meadowlands with a 30–3 score to settle. New York is a different team than it was on Sept. 22—different quarterback, different outlook, different result. Yes, **I'll go with the Jets.** In Seattle the fans were hollering for Jeff George on Sunday: "George! George! George!" Nothing unusual there. They always holler for guys with one-syllable names. It's too tough to pull off a "Hasselbeck! Hasselbeck!" chant. That won't do the Seahawks any good in the desert on Sunday. **Seattle loses to Arizona** and its one-syllable QB, Snake!

The **Giants** get their second round of zippy play-calling from coach Jim Fassel and beat the Vikings. The **Steelers,** noting the way the Ravens spied Michael Vick, set up their own spy network and top Atlanta. The **Eagles** keep it going against the Colts, the most bedraggled-looking 4–4 team in the league, and the Saints will have problems with the Carolina defense but not with the quarterback; **I'll give New Orleans the win.**

The **Rams** top the Chargers, still in shock after the Jets hung one on them. We'll ride along with the **Redskins,** a hot team after two straight victories, against the Jaguars, and after falling off New England's bandwagon last week, we'll climb back on and give the **Patriots** the win over struggling Chicago. —*Paul Zimmerman*

Check out Dr. Z's Inside Football every week at **cnnsi.com/football.**

PETER READ MILLER



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Source: *Gartner*, "How Web Services Mean Business," W. Andrews, D. Plummer, D. Smith, May 9, 2001

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The $3 Million

One horseplayer defied astronomical odds to hit the Pick Six jackpot on

BY L. JON WERTHEIM
Special Reporting by Mark Beech

AT 2:39 P.M. EDT ON Oct. 26, when the $1 million Breeders' Cup Mile ended, thousands of fans at Arlington Park racetrack joined handicappers across the country in cursing the winning horse, Domedriver, a 26–1 shot, for scuttling their chances of winning the Pick Six. The Mile was the first leg of that exotic wager—which requires a bettor to tab the winners of six straight races—so when the overwhelming favorite, Rock of Gibraltar, finished behind the long shot, an estimated 90% of the $4.7 million worth of tickets in play had no chance at the Pick Six pot.

But the Mile looked downright predictable compared with the Classic, the final leg of the Pick Six, when Volponi, a 43–1 shot, outran a field that included War Emblem and the favorite, Medaglia d'Oro. That anyone hit the Pick Six that day strained credulity. That there were six winning tickets verged on the absurd. "When you heard that a payoff that was supposed to be $3 million was a little more than $400,000, you knew something was up," says veteran California-based handicapper Jim Quinn.

The red flags had just begun to flap. The six winning tickets, it was quickly discovered, were held by a Maryland bettor, Derrick Davis, 29, who had placed his bets through a Catskill (N.Y.) Off-Track Betting outlet. OTB records reveal that he phoned in his bets 23 minutes before the Mile. Against almost inconceivable odds, Davis had "singled" the first four races—betting only one horse to win—but had combined those selections with *every* horse in the fifth and sixth races (thus, each ticket covered 96 possible combinations of six winning horses). Odder still, he had bet not the typical $2 on each of those combinations but $12 (six identical $2 tickets). Davis's winning tickets were worth $428,392 apiece. Bettors who hit five winners receive a consolation payout—in this case, $4,606.20—and 108 of Davis's tickets had five winning horses, yielding an additional $497,469.60. His total haul: $3,067,821.60. "Man," Davis told the *New York Post* four days later, "I just picked a few horses and got lucky."

Others weren't so sure. Both the Breeders' Cup and the National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA) immediately ordered the payout frozen and demanded an investigation. "If they got proof that I did something wrong, then show it to me," Davis said. "If not, give me my money."

While protesting his innocence, Davis may have prompted more questions than he answered. He painted himself as a serious handicapper and claimed that his good fortune was the product of "a lot of research." But why had he bet the same combinations six times instead of varying his selections to cover many more possible results, as horseplayers normally do with Pick Six bets? Davis, a computer technician, says his fingers slipped on the telephone keypad and he inadvertently punched in bets of $12 instead of $2, then confirmed a total of $1,152 in bets when he meant to wager only $192. Investigators sought an audiotape of Davis's phoned bets but discovered that the Catskill OTB is among the few parlors that does not record calls. This made it an ideal target for this kind of scam and also makes it more difficult to prove that a crime was committed.

Still, the tapestry quickly started to unravel. Last Thursday, Autotote Systems Inc., provider of the tote system used by Catskill OTB, announced that it had fired computer software engineer Chris Harn, 29, in connection with the case. The company said that Harn had the expertise to alter a Pick Six ticket electronically after it was purchased. He and Davis were in the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity together at Drexel University in the early 1990s and shared a house off-campus for at least one year.

Investigators are looking into the possibility of a third alleged conspirator, and that similar scams had been perpetrated.

THAT'S THE TICKET

RACE 1	RACE 2
Domedriver	Orientate
26–1	5–2

TAKEN FOR A RIDE

How investigators think two men turned the Breeders' Cup Pick Six into easy pickin's

2:14 P.M.
Derrick Davis calls in his bets, picking just one horse in each of the first four races and combining those picks with every horse in the last two.

2:37 P.M.
Betting on Pick Six closes as the first race goes to the post. In that race Domedriver beats heavy favorite Rock of Gibraltar.

SURE THING

Breeders' Cup day. Was he unbelievably lucky—or did he pull off a scam?

Indeed, last week New York State investigators quietly confirmed that two large Pick Six payouts from Saratoga in August are under review. (As SI went to press, no criminal charges had been filed. Neither Davis nor Harn responded to calls seeking comment, but through their attorneys they maintained that they had done nothing illegal or improper.)

However the drama plays out, concerns about the integrity of the pari-mutuel system could devastate a sport increasingly dependent on off-site gamblers. Twenty-five years ago horse racing was the most heavily attended sport in the U.S. Since then crowds at tracks have declined precipitously, while the amount of money wagered has steadily increased. The Runyonesque railbird has been replaced by a new breed of handicapper who need possess only a browser and a telephone.

Owing to the proliferation of simulcasting and online gambling, a mere 14.5% of the $14.5 billion wagered on horse racing in 2001 was bet at tracks, compared with nearly 85% a decade ago. If handicappers perceive that the deck is stacked against them, some will gravitate to the roulette wheel, the blackjack table or other games of chance. "This should be a big wake-up call," said Tim Smith, chairman of the NTRA. In firing Harn, Autotote characterized him as a "rogue" employee acting alone. But serious handicappers have long harbored doubts about whether the turf has been level, so to speak. Time and again bettors watch a horse go off at one set of odds and, unaccountably, pay off at another.

A sexy bet with lotto-like payouts, the Pick Six is particularly susceptible to fraud because offtrack sites don't transfer specific Pick Six bet information to the host track until after the fourth of the six races. That's one of the reasons that Davis's singling the first *four* races and then betting the field seemed so suspicious. The proffered reason for the delay in reporting bets is that it prevents the tracks' computer networks from overloading, but those networks are provided by tote companies, and it has been suggested that they are simply reluctant to invest in updated technology.

In the wake of last week's news, there has been a clarion call for improved oversight of electronic betting. Less clear is how it will come about. Thoroughbred racing is notoriously Balkanized, a crazy quilt of publicly traded tote companies, independently run racetracks, 1,100 offtrack betting sites, 42 state commissions (each with its own rules) and the NTRA, a quasi-governing body that is mostly a marketing arm. Last Friday the NTRA announced the formation of a "wagering technology working group." Representatives from the three major track operators—Churchill Downs (which owns Arlington), Magna (Santa Anita and Pimlico) and the New York Racing Association—were on a conference call to discuss ways to improve betting procedures.

Smith says that the NTRA has the bully pulpit, if not the formal authority, to lead the reform. Right now, however, the most pressing need is to restore consumer confidence. Not long ago the NTRA launched an advertising campaign centered on the catchphrase "Go, baby, go." To win back a raft of handicappers whose worst fears about the system seem to have been confirmed by this apparent scam, horse racing might need a new slogan: "Stay, baby, stay." □

The winning horses in the Breeders' Cup Pick Six included a pair of long shots in the first and last races that made the likelihood of a correct bet extremely remote

RACE 3	RACE 4	RACE 5	RACE 6
Starine	Vindication	High Chaparral	Volponi
13–1	4–1	9–10	43–1

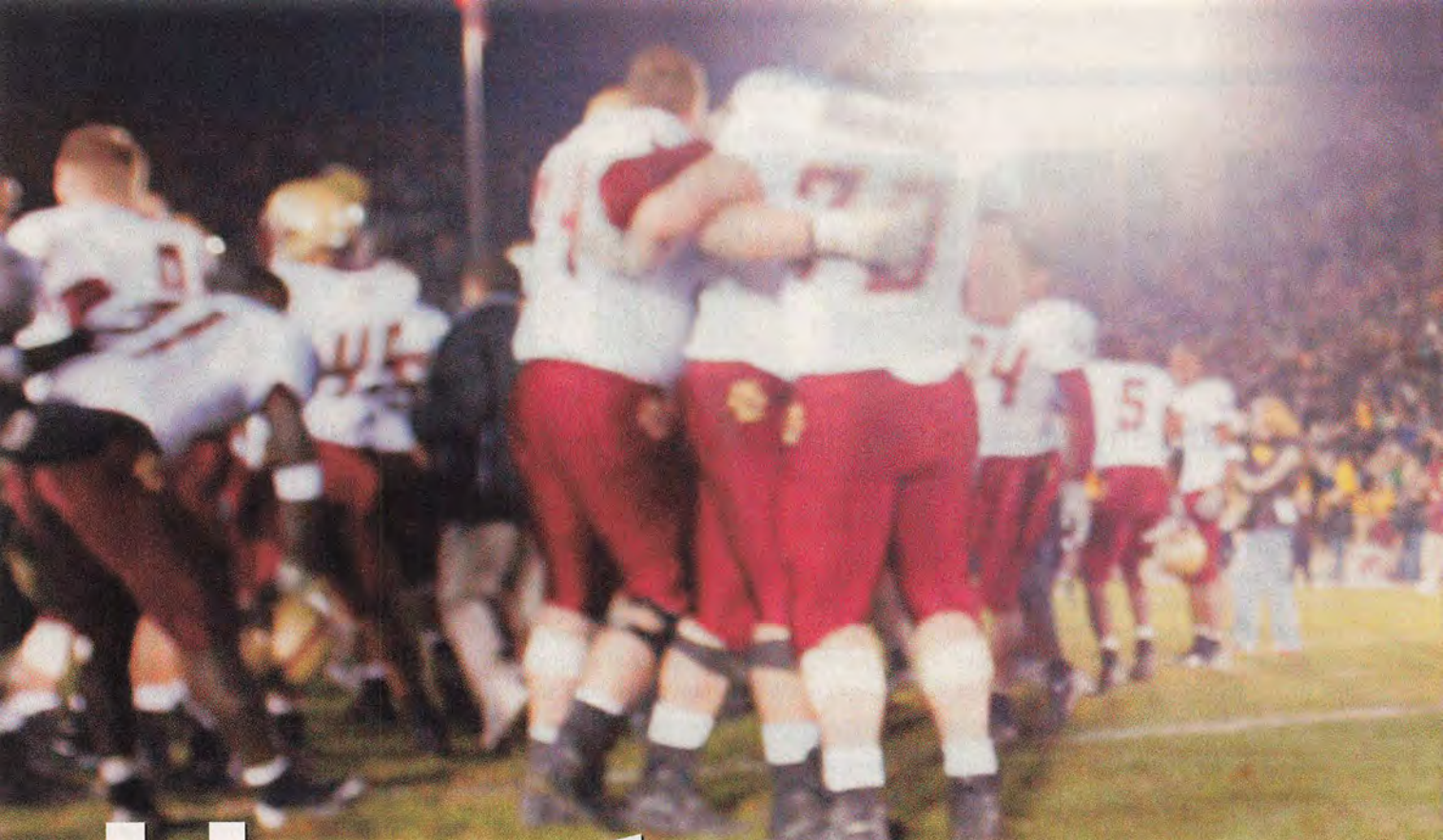
FROM LEFT: BRENT SMITH/REUTERS; JOHN ZICH/AFP; BRIAN KERSEY/AP; BRENT SMITH/REUTERS; JOHN ZICH/AFP; BILL FRAKES

4:25 P.M.
Vindication wins the fourth race of the Pick Six. Chris Harn, who now knows the results of the first four races, taps into an Autotote computer and changes Davis's bets to match those results.

5:01 P.M.
Fifth race starts. Before post time, offtrack betting sites send details of their Pick Six wagers to the Arlington Park track computer.

5:41 P.M.
Sixth race starts. Volponi wins the Classic, the final race of the Pick Six.

5:44 P.M.
The Pick Six payout of $428,392 is posted, indicating that there are six winning tickets. All of them are held by Davis.



COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Upset SATURDAY

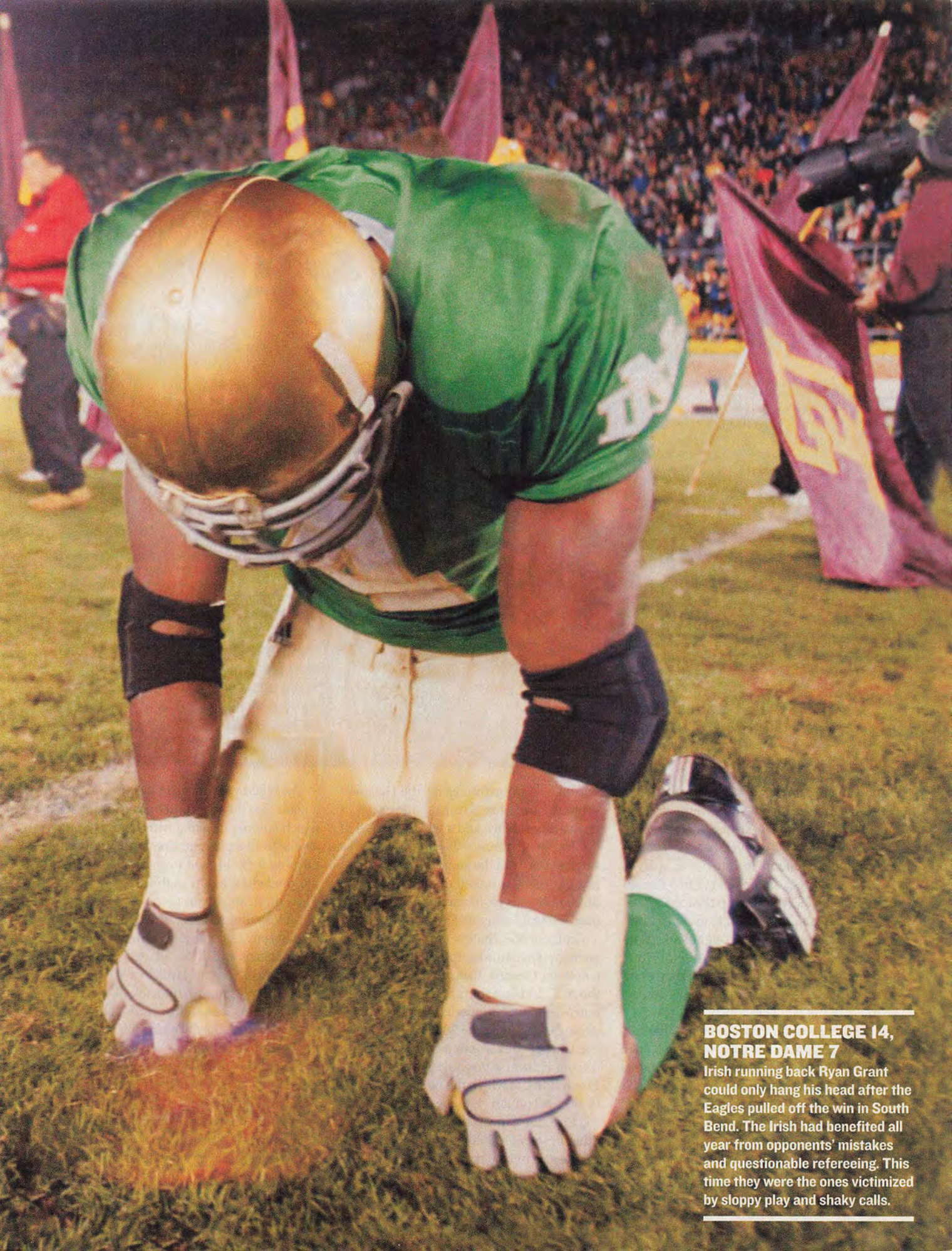
Four unbeatens were toppled last weekend—more evidence that the gap between the top teams and the rest of the pack has narrowed

BY AUSTIN MURPHY

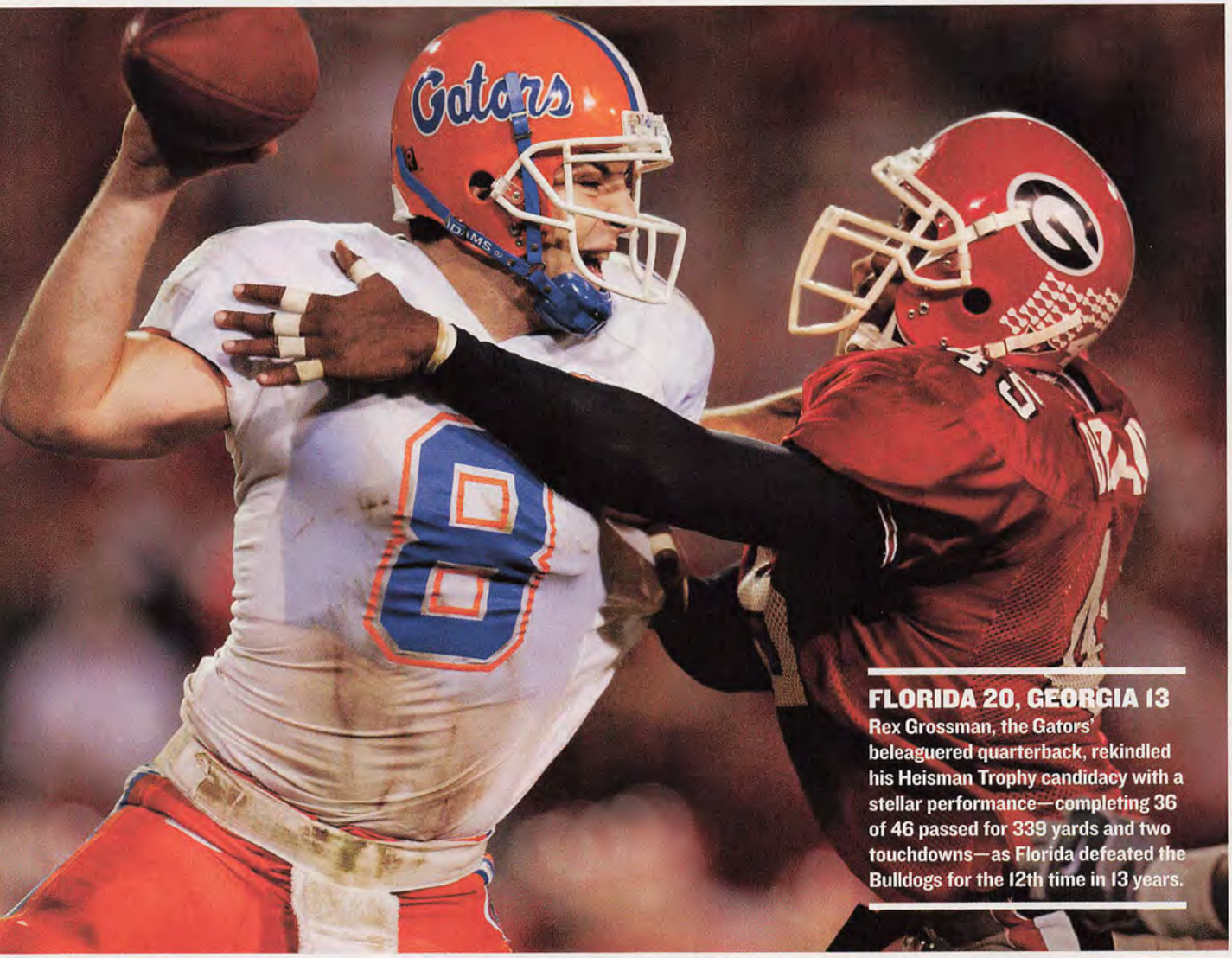
IT WAS PLEASING, in a cathartic sort of way. It cleared things up. Unless you were a fan of one of the four teams to fall from the ranks of the unbeaten, or bet unwisely, you enjoyed Upset Saturday. A quartet of underdogs—Boston College, Georgia Tech, Pitt and Florida—took a weed whacker to the Top 10, ending the undefeated seasons of, respectively, Notre Dame, North Carolina State, Virginia Tech and Georgia. When all the yard waste was raked and bagged, along with those green jerseys the Irish busted out, our view of college football's upper crust was vastly improved.

We were grateful. We were entertained. But was anyone really surprised? None of the

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT SCHEER/THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR/AP



BOSTON COLLEGE 14, NOTRE DAME 7
Irish running back Ryan Grant could only hang his head after the Eagles pulled off the win in South Bend. The Irish had benefited all year from opponents' mistakes and questionable refereeing. This time they were the ones victimized by sloppy play and shaky calls.



FLORIDA 20, GEORGIA 13
Rex Grossman, the Gators' beleaguered quarterback, rekindled his Heisman Trophy candidacy with a stellar performance—completing 36 of 46 passed for 339 yards and two touchdowns—as Florida defeated the Bulldogs for the 12th time in 13 years.

BOB ROSATO

previously perfect teams had been as flawless as their records. Notre Dame was undone by its famously erratic offense, which coughed up five turnovers. Coach Ty Willingham's decision to outfit the Irish in those shamrock-green jerseys had the unintended effect of firing up Boston College. "It just got me crazy," said Eagles free safety Ralph Parent, who made eight tackles, intercepted a pass and forced one of Notre Dame's seven fumbles. "I mean, they wanted to play dress-up for us? That's respect to us, thank you very much."

If there was an unbeaten team that had won uglier, on a more consistent basis, than Notre Dame, it had to be Georgia. Against Florida, in the game known as the World's Largest Cocktail Party, the Bulldogs allowed the Season's Largest Disappointment to redeem himself, somewhat. Gators quarterback Rex Grossman, who came into the season as a front-runner for the Heisman Trophy, came into Saturday in search of timing, confidence and a win. Deprived of his top deep threat—Taylor Jacobs was sidelined early in the game with a sprained right knee—Grossman dinked his way to 36 completions in 46 attempts, including a pair of touchdowns, as Florida won 20–13.

Critics of N.C. State said it hadn't played anybody. On Saturday the Wolfpack lost to a nobody, Georgia Tech, which was 2–3 in the ACC. In Blacksburg, Virginia Tech was outrushed and outmuscled by 13-point underdog Pittsburgh. The 28–21 loss devalues the Hokies' Dec. 7 game with Miami, reducing it from a possible play-in for the Fiesta Bowl, at which the national title will be decided on Jan. 4, to merely the de facto Big East title game (unless Pitt pulls off another upset, of Miami on Nov. 21, and ends up the sole unbeaten in conference play).

The biggest surprise, though, came from a team that failed to pull one off. Rutgers, which entered its game with Miami at 1–7, awoke from a pleasant dream to find itself nursing a 17–14 lead over the defending national champs through three quarters. The Hurricanes won going away, 42–17, but it was illuminating to see them struggle yet again. After stealing a victory against Florida State, which ran all over them, they gave up 363 rushing yards in a 40–23 win over West Virginia. With trick plays, alert special teams and stout defense early on, the Scarlet Knights did a nice job of knocking Miami off its game.

"There was never a question of losing," said Hurricanes center Brett Romberg. "It was just a matter of getting things done and getting them done convincingly."

For the first time this season Romberg and his teammates wore suits on a road

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trip. The premise: It was time to get down to business. Considering how they played for three quarters, the Hurricanes might as well have shown up in board shorts and tank tops. They looked sloppy, committing 13 penalties. For the second time this season they allowed a punt to be blocked and returned for a touchdown. They seemed affected by the 42° chill, huddling around the heated benches. Only in the final 15 minutes did they get down to business.

Why has Miami, anointed after its early-season rout of Florida as possibly one of the greatest college teams of all time, been good but not great most of the season? Yeah, yeah, we know: The Hurricanes get everyone's best game. Could it also be that we overestimated them?

The fact is, the gap between the sport's traditional powers and the rest of the pack has narrowed, thanks to the suits at the NCAA. Scholarship reductions imposed in the early '90s, from 105 to 85, have resulted in a more even distribution of talent across the country. That's why this year you've seen Louisville humble Florida State and Pitt have its way with Virginia Tech. Consider: Nebraska suffered its first loss to Iowa State since 1961 and has fallen out of the rankings for the first time since '81. Bowling Green has beaten two Big 12 teams, Kansas and Missouri, for the first time in its history. Rutgers led Tennessee at halftime of their Sept. 28 game, and on Saturday the Scarlet Knights—who'd lost their last three games to Miami by a combined score of 180–6—came within 15 minutes of their biggest win since a 6–4 triumph over Princeton in 1869, in the first-ever college football game. The difference between a 1–7 club and one with 29 straight victories was the depth and conditioning that turned a potential upset into a fourth-quarter romp.

The 85-scholarship rule "is going to keep games close from now on," says Pitt coach Walt Harris, who has guided a team that was 4–7 in 1996, the year before he was hired, to a 7–2 mark this season. "It's going to get harder to keep undefeated records going."

We'll see. Right now no team has an aura of invincibility. The three BCS-leading unbeatens, Oklahoma, Ohio State and Miami, have had close calls, and all face stern tests in the weeks to come. The Buckeyes, 34–3 winners over Minnesota on Saturday, still must face Michigan, albeit at home. The Hurricanes' upcoming game against Pitt now appears no less difficult than the more ballyhooed season-ending matchup with Virginia Tech.

Which leaves us with the Sooners, who are starting to remind people of the national champion 2000 Oklahoma team. After struggling in a 35–24 win over Texas on Oct. 12, senior quarterback Nate Hybl has been consistent and poised. In a driving rain on Saturday he threw three touchdown passes in a 27–11 win over a very good Col-

PITTSBURGH 28, VIRGINIA TECH 21

In what was to have been a showcase for the Hokies' running game, Pitt's offense stole the spotlight: Larry Fitzgerald *(left)* caught three touchdown passes, and running back Brandon Miree rumbled 53 yards for the clinching late-game touchdown.

JOHN IACONO

orado team. The defense, meanwhile, continues to be the most fearsome in the nation.

More worrisome for the Sooners' remaining opponents—Texas A&M, Baylor, Texas Tech and possibly Colorado again, in the Big 12 championship game—is that Oklahoma is improving each week. The roll his team is on feels familiar to coach Bob Stoops. "We've got the same feeling" as in 2000, he told reporters on Saturday. "We're traveling through the season the same way."

Having joined the ranks of one-loss teams, by contrast, Georgia is on a new road, one that almost certainly will not lead to the Fiesta Bowl. Bulldogs coach Mark Richt now faces some second-guessing over his two-quarterback system. After coming in for David Greene in the second quarter with Georgia ahead 7–6, D.J. Shockley threw a pick that was returned 47 yards for a touchdown. The Dawgs lost by seven. But Richt can take the heat. He has done a remarkable job this season, in part because he's avoided the sort of mental errors that cost him two games last year.

"You're always one game away from doing something pretty dumb," says Richt. "You're never out of the woods." The nice thing about Upset Saturday was that now we can see the forest for the trees. □

ONE, NOT DONE

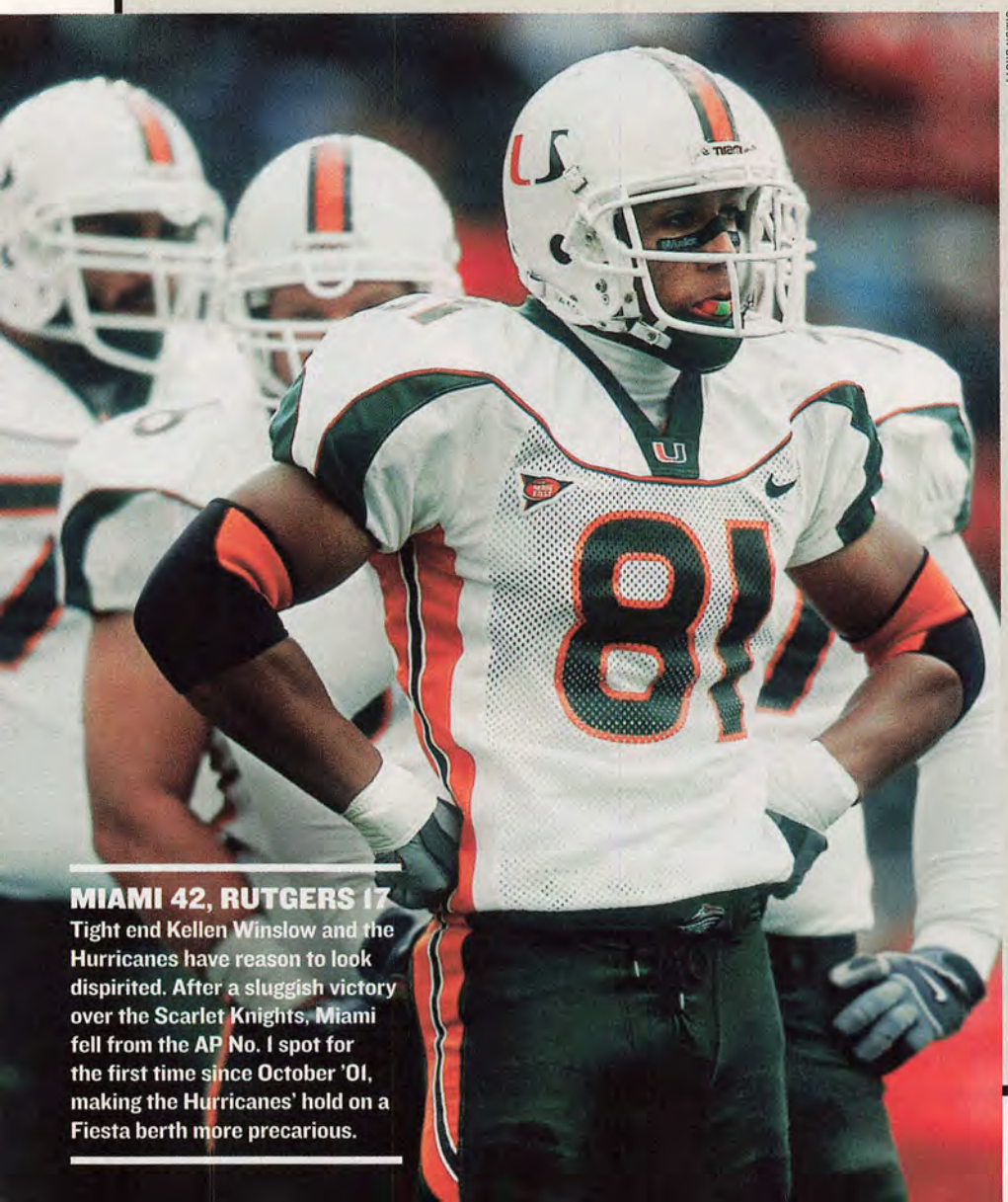
Seemingly without hope a week ago, one-loss teams are back in the race

HOW AMUSING it would be, after all this sound and fury, if the top two teams at the end of the season were the top two teams from the beginning: Miami and Oklahoma. But history says it's unlikely both will make it to January unscathed. Since its inception in the 1998 season, only once has the BCS title game matched up two unbeaten teams. That record, and last Saturday's results, hearten talented one-loss squads such as Texas, Washington State and Iowa. Here's a quick look at the BCS this week.

• Texas's season isn't over after all. By defeating Nebraska 27–24, the Longhorns rose to fourth in the polls and the BCS. Texas is now in the situation the Cornhuskers were in last year, when the Huskers made the national title game: The Longhorns are the highest-ranked one-loss team, and they won't have to play in the Big 12 title game unless Oklahoma loses twice.

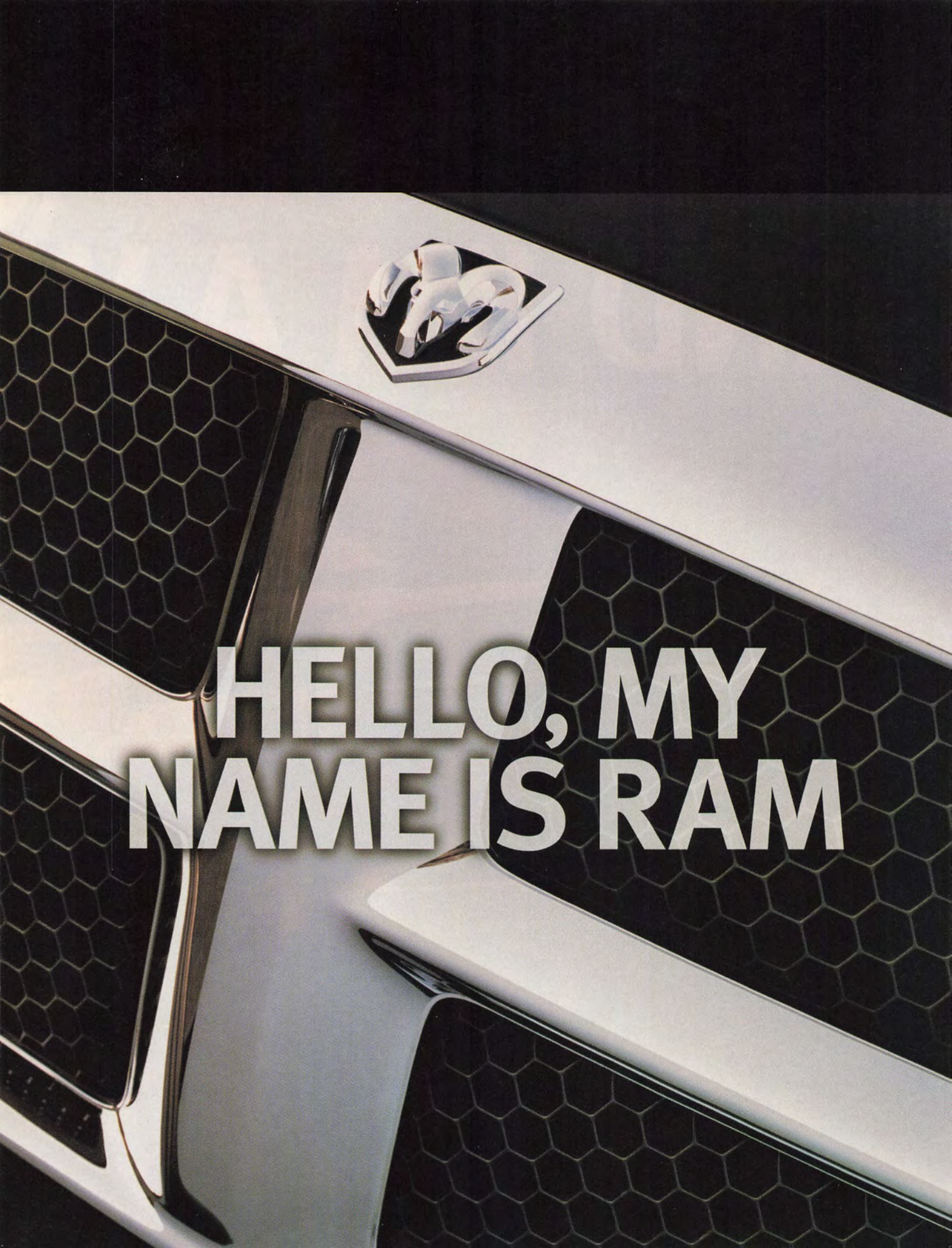
• Ohio State and Miami are in a dogfight. The Buckeyes' narrow edge over the Hurricanes in this week's BCS standings (5.57 points to 6.01) should erode over the final weeks, given Miami's stronger schedule (Tennessee, Syracuse, Pitt and Virginia Tech) compared with that of Ohio State (Purdue, Illinois and Michigan). The Buckeyes would also suffer significantly if Washington State drops out of the BCS top 10, since Ohio State would lose the .6 of a point quality-win credit for having beaten the Cougars. But if Miami drops to No. 2 in the coaches' poll, that would be nearly as damaging to the Canes.

• Oklahoma solidified its No. 1 position. Miami's lackluster performance against Rutgers and the Sooners' convincing win over dangerous Colorado were enough to push Oklahoma past the Canes into the No. 1 spot in the AP poll. In addition, Texas's leap in the BCS ranking from seven to four means the Sooners' quality-win credit for having beaten the Longhorns went up. In fact, the higher Texas climbs, the better off Oklahoma is. Ready for a Red River rematch in Tempe on Jan. 4?



SIMON BRUTY

MIAMI 42, RUTGERS 17
Tight end Kellen Winslow and the Hurricanes have reason to look dispirited. After a sluggish victory over the Scarlet Knights, Miami fell from the AP No. 1 spot for the first time since October '01, making the Hurricanes' hold on a Fiesta berth more precarious.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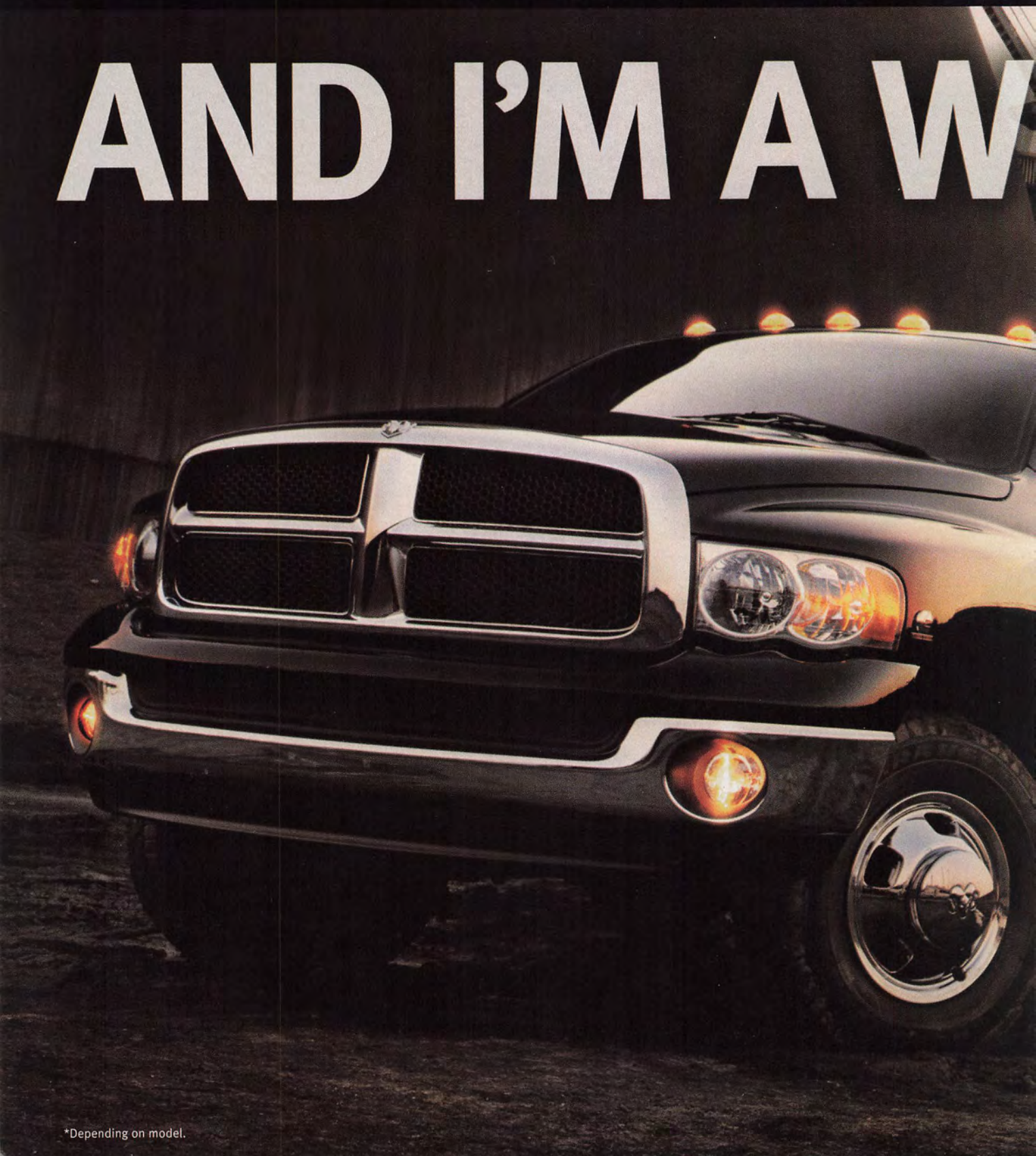

*Depending on model.

GRAB LIFE BY THE HORNS

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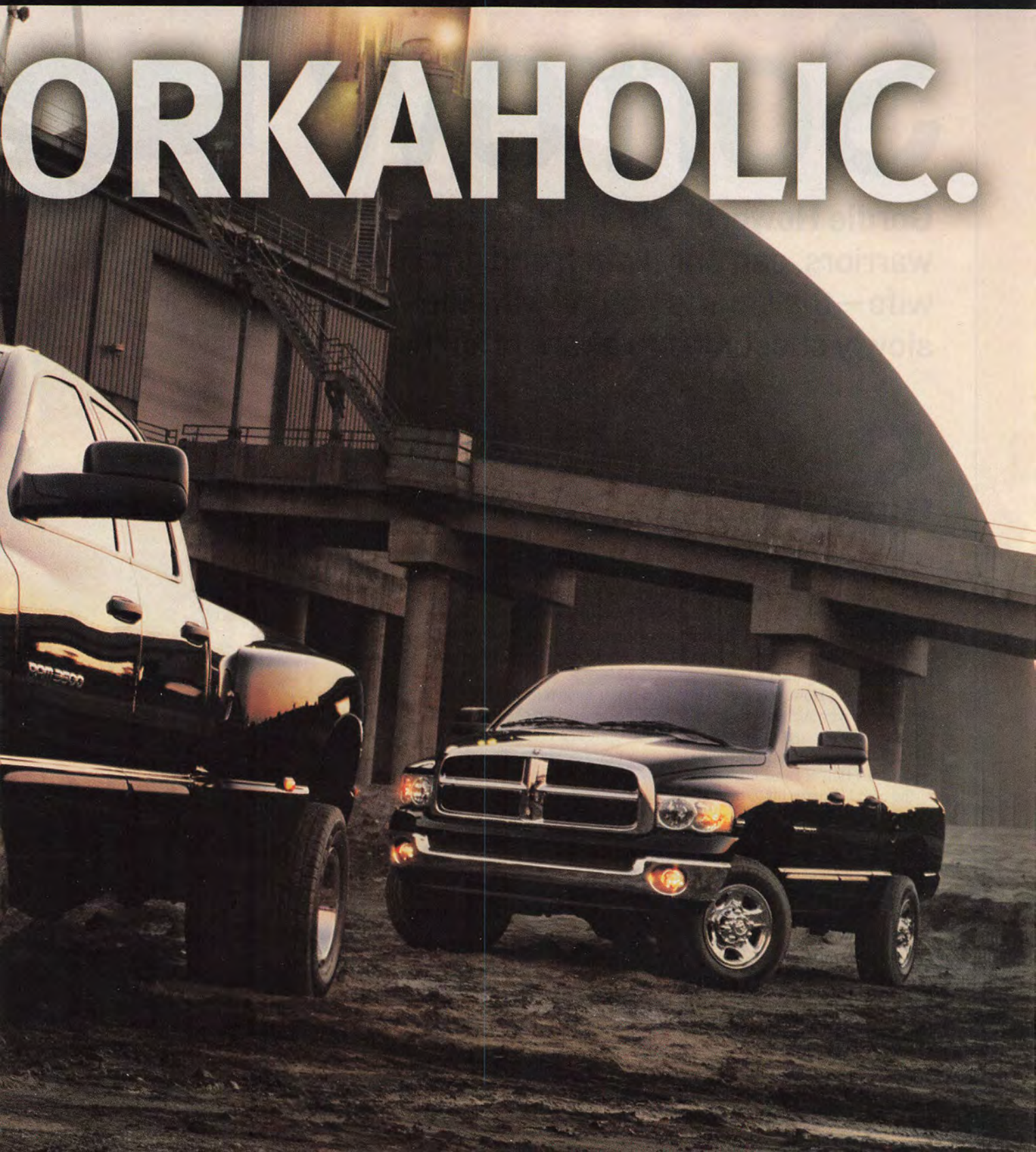


SWEET Sorrow

Gordie Howe, one of his sport's fiercest warriors, can only watch and grieve as his wife—the smarts behind Mr. Hockey—slowly succumbs to a rare brain disorder

BY ALLEN ABEL

SLIDING TOWARD a shadowed place where light and hope cannot reach her, a woman sits in a padded chair, and a small black dog licks her hand. There is a toddler's safety gate at the top of the basement stairs, and every door that leads outside is equipped with an alarm, not to keep intruders away from the home in Bloomington Hills, Mich., a leafy suburb of Detroit, but to keep the woman inside during the dislocated wanderings that are a consequence of her terrible, wasting affliction. The man of the house—one of the paramount athletes of the 20th century, an icon of humility and patience—is as stricken as his dying wife, and already feels her loss. "If missing someone is love," says Gordie Howe, "then that's what it is."

Colleen Joffa Howe has Pick's disease, a lesser-known form of dementia comparable with Alzheimer's in its inexorable destruction of the mind, yet specific in the portions of the brain it attacks. There is no cure. Colleen is 69, and had this misfortune not befallen her, early next year she would have been leading her Hall of Fame husband toward a cluster of milestones: her 70th birthday in February, his 75th in March, their golden anniversary in April.

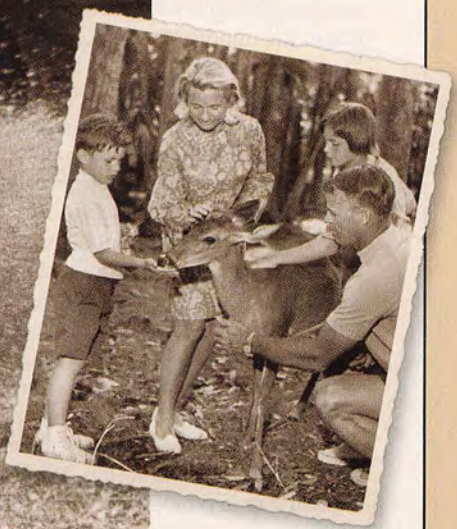
Now that cavalcade of happiness will not occur. After years of private sorrow, the Howes—Gordie, sons Marty, 48, Mark, 47, and Murray, 42, and daughter Cathy Purnell, 43—have decided that the time has come to publicly close ranks with the millions of other families whose elders have faded into the same unreachable dimness. Extraordinary in their achievements, the great Red Wing and his family bear a common grief. "It's one of those things that always happens to someone else," says Marty. "Until it happens to you."

For at least the past year, Gordie was his wife's sole caregiver—preparing her meals and medication, shepherding her through her wanderings, waking in terror at the sound of those door alarms. (With the disease rapidly progressing, a nurse now helps him three days a week for four hours each day.) The little teacup poodle named Rocket, after Gordie's nemesis on the Montreal

HAPPIER TIMES Colleen and Gordie on their wedding day in 1953; Gordie and sons Marty (center) and Mark with the upstart Aeros in 1973.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: BETTMAN/CORBIS; MARK A. HICKS; FLORIDA'S HOMOSASSA SPRINGS; BETTMAN/CORBIS (2)

FAMILY ALBUM
Gordie (with Colleen) was choked up in 1981 when his number was retired in Hartford; (from left) Marty, Cathy, Gordie, Colleen, Mark and Murray in '93; Murray and Cathy with their parents in the late 1960s.



Canadiens, Maurice (Rocket) Richard, once was her joy and companion. But now, says Gordie, "it's just a dog."

"When Mom first quit eating," Cathy says of Colleen, who has lost close to 30 pounds over the last two months, "Dad would order a pizza. But then he wouldn't eat either, because he didn't want to be eating if she wasn't."

The chores have been onerous, the toll of sorrow obvious in the big man's eyes. But Gordie was taught as a small boy on a Saskatchewan farm not to weep for his woe, nor shun his duty. "For him," says Murray, a radiologist in Toledo, "it's like getting a Ph.D. in life."

Colleen Howe was one of the first women to demand and win a place at the money tables of major league sports. Twenty-nine years ago, as America's first female player agent, she negotiated the revolutionary package that brought Gordie out of his early retirement—he was only 45!—and teamed him on the ice with Marty and Mark in the World Hockey Association for the happiest seasons of Gordie's legendary career. She raised and nursed and chauffeured four athletic children and arranged her husband's every personal appearance, every grand tour, as well as hundreds of acts of public and secret charity, leaving the man his mates called Power free to rearrange the scoring records of the NHL and the facial bones of his opponents.

"She fought as diligently as any agent I've ever worked with, in sports or Hollywood," says Howard Baldwin, who was president of the New England Whalers when Colleen negotiated the move of Gordie, Marty and Mark to that team from the WHA's Houston Aeros in 1977. During those negotiations, Baldwin, now a film producer in California, flew to Michigan, where Colleen had purchased a small ranch and was raising exotic livestock. "There she was, out in the middle of a field, feeding llamas," Baldwin recalls. "I got attacked by a goat as I walked out there. We went at it until two in the morning, but we got the deal done. At the press conference [to announce that the Howes were joining the Whalers], she gave me a toy goat."

Shrewd and visionary, Colleen even had Gordie's name trademarked, as well as their sobriquets: Mr. and Mrs. Hockey. For this relentless drive and ambition, she was ridiculed. "Back then, hockey wives were told, 'Stay at home and stay out of the way,' " says Mark. "Even when I got engaged 25 years ago, I remember telling my fiancée, 'My team comes first,' and that sort of stuff. It took us a few years before we realized that's pretty stupid."

"She got angry at the walls that were built up," Cathy recalls. "But she said, 'Well, I'll just pull 'em down!' "

"I used to hear people say, 'Your mom's butting into your dad's business,' " Mark says. "Well, after he retired, the NHL wanted him to go everywhere for nothing. Mom said, 'Gordie's not going anywhere unless he gets paid.' People said, 'That's horses---,' but she stood her ground because that's how he made his living."

A few weeks ago, the younger of Cathy's two daughters, 15-year-old Jade, was assigned to write an essay on a topic of her choosing for her honors English course in Helena, Mont. Jade's composition is titled *Gone.*

She used to call, and we would talk on the phone for hours. I could barely get a word in so I mostly listened. . . .

I wonder what she thinks about now when I talk to her. Confusion is a constant with her. I wonder how long it will be before Gramma no longer recognizes me. The doctors' answers are no more clear than hers. I miss her, and she isn't even gone yet.

ARNOLD PICK was a German neurologist in the late 19th century. The malady that he first detected in a patient who had lost the ability to speak is classified as a progressive dementia. Its widely varying symptoms can include aggressiveness, obsessive walking routines, rudeness and a loss of inhibitions. Some patients survive 10 years; others less than two. That something was not right with Mrs. Hockey was clear as early as five years ago. "She used to be so sharp, with such a memory," Gordie says, "and suddenly those names and numbers weren't coming back."

NO MERCY Howe was known for his hard checks as well as for his soft hands.

BETTMAN/CORBIS

"He won't like me saying this," Mark says about Gordie, "but he was the most cruel player I ever saw."

At first the slips of memory were humorous. "I remember a woman came over to sell my parents long-term insurance," says Cathy. "She asked Mom for her phone number, and Mom said, 'I have so many telephones, I can't remember them all.' She asked Mom for her address, and Mom said, 'This is where I live—right here.' And we all were in the other room, laughing."

"We noticed she was different, but we didn't know what to do about it," says Murray. "Imagine approaching a loved one and saying, 'We think you're losing your mind, and you need to get tested.' "

By then, about four years ago, Mrs. Hockey was getting the nine grandchildren's birthdays mixed up and sending graduation cards a year early. She was defensive about her lapses; it was overwork, she protested, the weariness of being a nonstop CEO. At Murray's insistence, there was testing, including a six-hour interview in the spring of 2000 with one of Ohio's leading experts on dementia. The news could not have been worse.

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"I sat down with Mom and Dad," Murray says. "I told them, 'This is a progressive disease—we don't know the exact time frame, but it will be a long, hard road.' "

Murray is not a neurologist and is not an expert on Pick's disease. In medical school, he says, it was dismissed in a single sentence: This is really rare; you'll never see it. The instructors were wrong. "She's my mom, the biggest influence on my life of *anyone*," Murray says. "To slowly lose that person is very, very hard."

MR. HOCKEY is introduced as the keynote speaker at the 19th annual dinner of the Transportation Club of Detroit. The fete is a gathering of railroad and trucking people at the sumptuous Dearborn Inn, near the Ford Motor Company headquarters. "They used to make us stay here during the playoffs," Gordie whispers as he walks into the hall. (Some coaches sequester players during the postseason to keep them focused.) "But I'd sneak out and go home anyway."

Inside the banquet hall, as the crowd presses forward, it's bobbleheads and bedlam. Some 40 years ago, when he was earning $30,000 a season as the most gifted and punishing forward in the NHL and the league's MVP, Gordie spent his summers traveling across Canada and signing autographs on behalf of Eaton's department stores. For this, he would earn an additional $10,000, enough to buy Colleen and the kids a summer cottage near Grayling, Mich., which he rarely had time to enjoy. Back then, in Moncton or Victoria or Port Arthur, he would begin signing autographs in the stores before seven in the morning and not cease until the dark of night. A smile, a story, a memory for everyone.

An adulatory biographical film—conceived by Mrs. Hockey as part of Gordie's 65th-birthday celebration in 1993—is shown to the crowd. Then he moves to the podium. "One pair of pants, one shirt, nine kids, a father on a tractor," Gordie tells his audience, encapsulating his prairie origins. "But rich in friendship."

He moves on to an anecdote about how Colleen—"a lady who has been my leader"—pulled off the brilliant triple play that brought Gordie and teenagers Marty and Mark to the WHA's Aeros in 1973. Gordie, who had retired from the Red Wings two years earlier, didn't see it coming. "She did a lot of things without my knowledge," he says about Colleen. "I guess she knew I'd say yes anyway."

Houston went on to win two league championships and then bit the Texas dust in 1978, leading to the Howes' signing with the Whalers. After that season the NHL absorbed four WHA teams, including the Whalers, and Gordie wound up playing on a line with Bobby Hull and Dave Keon—three old goats with 2,000 pro goals among them and a combined age of more than 130. But that was long ago, and now he begins to tell the audience about Colleen's illness, and the loneliness, and the pain. "I had a lot of knocks, and this is the biggest one I ever had," he says.

His voice wavers, but he goes on to describe for the gathering how shy he was the night he went to the Lucky Strike Lanes on Grand River Avenue in Detroit in the late winter of 1950. "The greatest thing that ever happened to me," says Gordie, "is that I went to watch a young lady bowl."

IT'S NO surprise that in Colleen's self-published autobiography, *and. . . HOWE!*, she included some of Gordie's love letters.

June 14, 1952
Hi dear,
Once again I have heard three sweet words from you which I should use more often and that is, "I miss you." They sound awful good coming to me from such a sweet young lady as you and again I say I should use them much more often. But the truth is I don't know much of sweet words so just give me time as I am a comer.
Love Gordie

By this time, the awkward Romeo had been in Detroit for six seasons, had played in five All-Star Games, had seen his name engraved on the Stanley Cup, had led the league in scoring twice, and had just been named MVP for the first of six times. He was a dark-haired, square-jawed, big-shouldered, dangerously handsome brute who could stickhandle through a mob of Maple Leafs and then delicately flip the puck into the net. But with Colleen, he was milking the aw-shucks thing for all it was worth, and it worked to perfection on a young woman who had never witnessed a hockey game.

ALL BUSINESS Colleen proved to be a shrewd, hard-nosed negotiator for Gordie.

SHELLY KATZ

Colleen was the first woman to demand and win a place at the big-money table of major league sports.

Their backgrounds were disparate. His dad, Ab, drove that tractor on his farm outside Saskatoon. Her father, Howard Mulvaney, played the trombone in the Benny Goodman Orchestra. Gordie had always planned to marry early: "I thought it should be before 25," he says. "Why be old and have young kids?"

Colleen concurred. From the moment she agreed to marry Gordie, he would defer to her superior intelligence. "Girls have

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more time to think," says Mr. Hockey. "They're not whacking each other over the head."

It would be another decade before the Howes knew for sure how ruthlessly he was being robbed by Red Wings management, though Colleen had long suspected as much. A defenseman named Bob Baun, who was traded to Detroit in 1968, broke the NHL's code of silence and told Gordie over drinks one night that he was earning twice as much as Gordie was. "When Bobby told me how much he was making, I said, 'Oh, Jesus.' I believed him, but what could you say? Back then, *nobody* was making much money. Our money from one season was gone before the next."

He went home, and Colleen said, "I told you so." She and Gordie flew to Fort Lauderdale, to confront Bruce Norris, who owned the team. Gordie recalls Norris saying, "Oh! All right then—we'll sign you for two years at $75,000!"

Until the WHA came along in 1972, there was not much Colleen could do about her husband's pay, and the family lived modestly. Eventually, Mrs. Hockey nudged the Red Wings to raise Mr. Hockey's salary toward $100,000.

"Part of my dad's greatness is that he never made big money," Murray says. "I'm *glad* that I didn't grow up with a silver spoon. It's a blessing that we grew up as a middle-class family."

DEVOTED For much of the past year Gordie has been Colleen's sole caregiver.

"This is a progressive disease," said Murray. "We don't know the time frame, but it will be a long, hard road."

OBSCURED IN the onrush of encomiums for Gordie in response to the news of his wife's illness is the harsher side that he showed on the ice. "He won't like me saying this, but he was the most cruel hockey player I ever saw," says Mark, who played 22 years in the WHA and NHL. "Vicious. Absolutely nasty. He was highly skilled. He was bigger [six-feet, 205 pounds] than most of the other players of that era, and he had a meanness to him. If somebody wanted to go that way, he would go as far as that player wanted. I saw some of the stuff he did when nobody was looking.

"Hurting people—maybe that's what makes a great athlete, the willingness to do *anything* to win," Mark continues. "If he did some of the stuff now that he did then, he'd be suspended all the time. In Houston a guy hurt Marty in practice. I don't know how many teeth Gordie knocked out of that guy's mouth, but it was quite a few—and this was our teammate!

"I remember when we played together, I'd go into the boards and the man who was covering me would hit me and I'd take the check. Then, a second later, I'd feel this *boom!* It was Dad hitting the guy who hit me! I told him, 'I know you're trying to protect me, but Dad, I can take *his* hit, just not *yours*.' "

"Once he put the skates on, he was a different person," agrees Marty, who is an assistant coach for the Chicago Wolves of the American Hockey League. "When we went to training camp the first year in Houston, I was scared for him. After practice, he turned not just red [from exhaustion] but different shades of purple. After 10 days, though, he was dominating everybody."

Last spring, as the Wings moved toward their 10th Stanley Cup, Mark spent some time with his mother in her last days of mental clarity. He saw his father's sadness sagging into hopelessness. "On the ice we always called him Gordie," Mark says, "but when he was hurt, we called him Dad."

WHEN YOU claim your bags at the gleaming new Northwest Airlines terminal at Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport, big Number 9 looks down on you from a mural of sporting heroes. At the Joe Louis Arena a photograph on a pillar outside Section 111 shows him in his early 20s, taut and sharp, a Superman lick of hair across his brow. And a tribute to youth hockey posted nearby reads: THIS IS THE FOUNDATION THAT GETS MOMS AND DADS OUT OF BED ON DARK, COLD WINTER MORNINGS SO THEIR SONS OR DAUGHTERS CAN SKATE. AND THE DREAM IS ALWAYS THE SAME: MAYBE MY KID WILL BE THE NEXT GORDIE HOWE. . . .

To his grandchildren, he is simply PeePaw. "I think he's learned a lot about himself the last two years," Cathy says. "He had more strength and more intelligence than anyone gave him credit for. Can he live without her? I hope so.

"Every one of us said, 'Dad, move in with us.' And he said, 'No. This is my home.' "

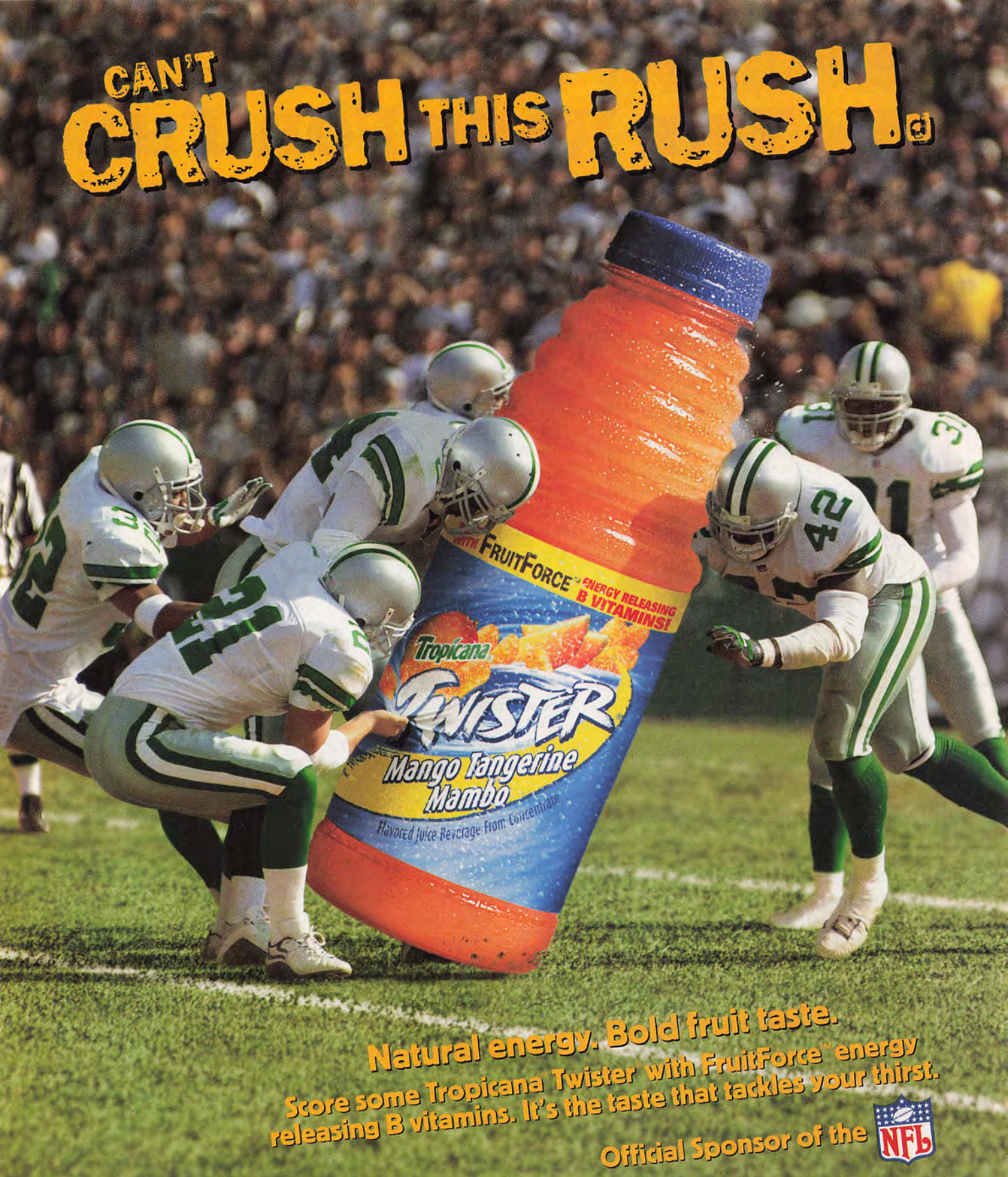
"I think at times he's scared," says Murray, "wondering what's going to happen when she's gone. He'll have to redefine his life, but he's not one to show fear. Pity is the last thing he wants. He'll want to be seen as another kind of role model—an ideal spouse in time of need and an ideal widower who wants to go on and not give up. I asked him what he would like to do when she's gone, and he said he wants to keep going out and touch as many lives as possible."

In Montana, with the first snow of winter on the ground, Cathy has one last story to share, a tale from when Jade was very young. She told Gordie once, "PeePaw, I'm going to marry a man like you when I grow up."

"Then Jade went in the other room," Cathy says, "and I told my father, 'She doesn't realize—there *are* no more like you.' "□

Allen Abel's fourth book, Flatbush Odyssey: A Journey Through the Heart of Brooklyn, *was republished in March.*

DAVID H. SCHREIBER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THE RACE FOR THE HEISMAN TROPHY

The Fans Cast An Official Ballot At voteheisman.com

THIS WEEK'S LEADING NOMINEES

The top vote-getters by percentage (plus a dark horse) in the fan poll at www.voteheisman.com. Visit the site and vote because the player with the most fan support on Dec. 2 receives one first-place vote in the official Heisman balloting.

23* **QB Seneca Wallace, Iowa State (7–3)**
Set school mark with 493 yards total offense in 42–35 win vs. Missouri; 249.5 pass ypg in '02
NEXT GAME: Nov. 9 at Kansas State, 7 p.m. ET, TBS

20 **RB Maurice Clarett, Ohio State (10–0)**
Did not play (injured shoulder) in 34–3 win vs. Minnesota; 1,019 yards, 13 TDs in 8 games
NEXT GAME: Nov. 9 at Purdue, Noon ET, ABC regional broadcast

7 **RB Avon Cobourne, West Virginia (6–3)**
94 rush yards, 2 TDs in 46–20 win at Temple; 20th alltime in NCAA with 4,600 career yards
NEXT GAME: Nov. 9 vs. Boston College, Noon ET, ESPN

6 **QB Philip Rivers, N.C. State (9–1)**
21-of-41 passing for 277 yards, 1 TD in 24–17 loss vs. Georgia Tech; 242.1 pass ypg, 17 TDs
NEXT GAME: Nov. 9 at Maryland, Noon ET, ABC regional broadcast

6 **QB Byron Leftwich, Marshall (6–2)**
Threw for 307 yards despite injured shin in 34–20 loss at Akron; 66.8% passing, 374.4 ypg
NEXT GAME: Nov. 12 vs. Miami (Ohio), 8 p.m. ET, ESPN

QB Jason Gesser, Washington State (8–1)
250 pass yards, 3 TDs in 44–22 win vs. Arizona State; 62 career TD passes set school record
NEXT GAME: Nov. 9 vs. Oregon, 3:30 p.m. ET, ABC regional broadcast

HANDICAPPING THE HUNT FOR THE HEISMAN

Here's what college fans are saying about their favorite players on the message board at www.voteheisman.com.

"[Colorado RB] Chris Brown leads the nation in rushing with 1,406 yards while sharing time with two other backs." — *Bill McSweeney, Westlake Village, Calif.*

"[Oklahoma RB] Quentin Griffin's pinball-like elusiveness gives him big-play potential when he has the ball." — *David Whitney, Oklahoma City*

"[Iowa QB] Brad Banks is dangerous with his arm and with his legs. The team is surprising everyone." — *Kevin Finnegan, Atlanta*

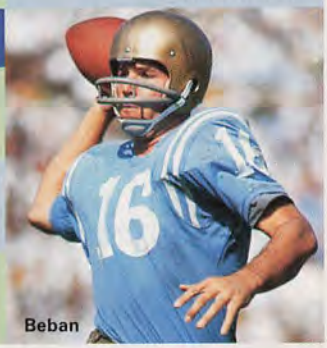
"With the toughest schedule in the nation, [USC QB] Carson Palmer has led the Trojans to hard-earned victories." — *Harold Ibarra, Norwalk, Calif.*

HEISMAN HEROES FLASHBACKS

HB Howard Cassady, Ohio State *On Nov. 12, 1955, Hopalong ran for 169 yards and three TDs in a 20–10 win vs. Iowa. Voted the AP's top male athlete in '55, he broke the 100-yard mark in four of his last five games and scored 15 TDs.*

QB Gary Beban, UCLA *On Nov. 11, 1967, Beban completed 14 of 22 passes for 289 yards and a season-high three TDs in a 48–0 win vs. Washington. The Great One ran for 11 TDs and threw for eight in '67. He had a hand in 58 career TDs.*

HB John Cappelletti, Penn State *On Nov. 10, 1973, Cappy carried a school-record 41 times for 220 yards and three TDs in a 35–29 win vs. N.C. State. The bruising back ended '73 with 1,522 yards and 17 TDs for the 12–0 Nittany Lions.*



Beban

WALTER IOOSS JR.

Go to www.voteheisman.com through Dec. 2 to participate in official balloting and comment on the candidates.

Compiled by Alec Morrison

*Percentage of fans' first-place votes through Nov. 3. Check local listings for games to be broadcast in your area.

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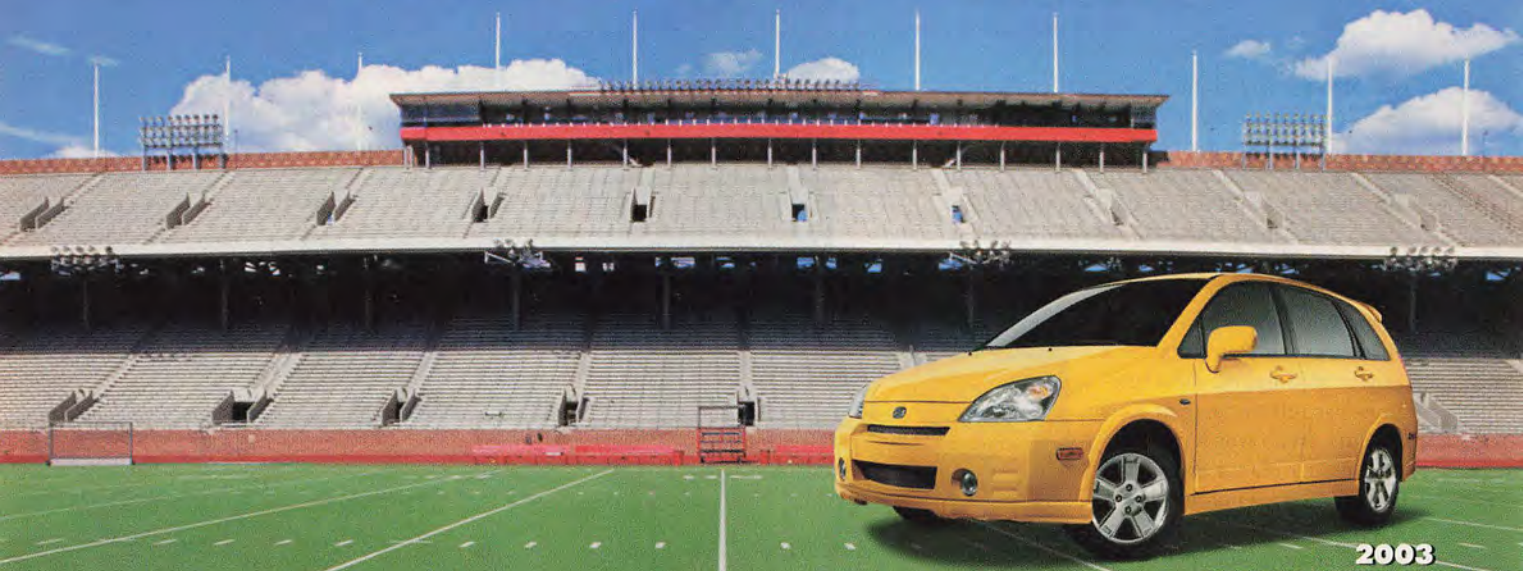

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AVG. MILES/YR.	14,285	10,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	10,000	10,000
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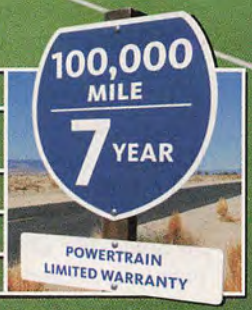

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Hello,

This city is famous for its gamblers, prostitutes, exhibitionists, anti-Christs, alcoholics, sodomites, drug addicts, fetishists, onanists, pornographers, frauds, jades . . . all of whom are only too well protected by graft.

—JOHN KENNEDY TOOLE
A Confederacy of Dunces

IN HIS screed about New Orleans, Ignatius J. Reilly, the oversized and audacious protagonist of Toole's sprawling, comic novel, neglected to mention mimes, tarot-card readers, strip-show hucksters and frozen-daiquiri dispensers, all of whom annoyingly clamor for the tourist dollar in and around the French Quarter. But look, the Big Easy isn't *that* sleazy. When the NBA returned to the city on Oct. 30 after a 23-year absence, the most egregious assault on taste at New Orleans Arena was a pregame "prayer" by Mayor Ray Nagin that solicited not only a Hornets victory over the Utah Jazz but also a championship for the newly arrived team. Then Mayor Ray sent the sellout crowd of 17,688 into a frenzy with three raucous *Amens!*

DAVID E. KLUTHO

Praise the Lord and pass the ACLU briefs. Given the circumstances and the setting, though, Hizzoner's cheerleading invocation seemed oddly apropos, as did the Hornets' donning of Sly Stone–like silver capes for their introduction; the soulful rendering of the national anthem by Aaron Neville, who wore a Hornets number 1 jersey over a camouflage T-shirt; the crackling firecrackers and the multicolored streamers; and the vampire fangs on Hugo, the team's mascot. The New Orleans Hornets (say it a few dozen times, and maybe you'll get used to it) then cooperated with a 100–75 victory over Utah, the franchise that fled New Orleans after the 1978–79 season and took with it the nickname that rightfully belongs to the city that is the birthplace of jazz. "New Orleans loves a show," said Hornets forward P.J. Brown, "and we gave 'em one."

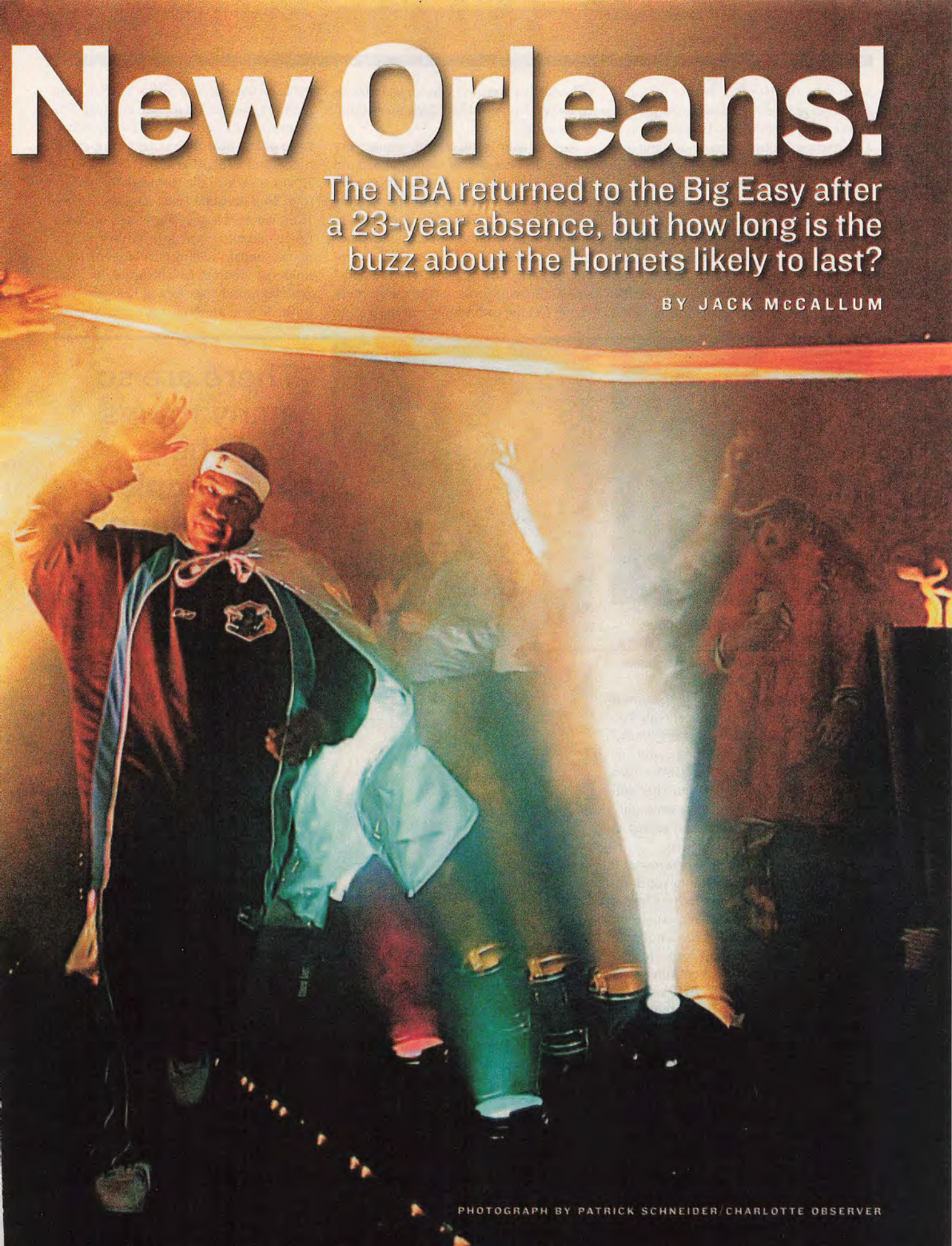
Indeed, there could be no more fitting new act in

CAPED CRUSADER Suitably attired to provide the Hornets' opening-game heroics, Davis also led them to victory over Sean Marks and Miami.

New Orleans!

The NBA returned to the Big Easy after a 23-year absence, but how long is the buzz about the Hornets likely to last?

BY JACK McCALLUM



PHOTOGRAPH BY PATRICK SCHNEIDER/CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

town than the Hornets, whose majority owner played the role of Satan for the last two seasons in Charlotte. George Shinn is a man whose indiscretions landed him in a civil trial in 1997. While the jury found in favor of Shinn on allegations of sexual assault, the embarrassing proceedings resulted in boffo ratings for Court TV, a divorce for Shinn and a cold shoulder for the team from its once-crazed fans. New Orleans understands, George, and doesn't hold bad behavior against anyone. The Big Easy is a place of excess, not only the home of saints (and Saints) but also the haven of sinners. "In many neighborhoods you have a church and a bar on every block," says former mayor Mark Morial, who's as responsible as anyone for the NBA's return to the city. "Sometimes two churches and two bars." New Orleanians like contradiction and complication, and irony as rich as their beignets and chicory coffee.

Speaking of irony, the Hornets' moving trucks had just begun heading south on I-85 when Charlotte's city fathers began angling for a new arena and an expansion team, goals that the NBA has endorsed with enthusiasm. Though players are generally oblivious to current events that don't directly involve them, Hornets veterans are a bit chafed by the prospect of a new team in their old town as soon as 2004–05. "I'm not buying that Charlotte is going to support a team just because the old owners are gone," says guard David Wesley, who is in his sixth year with the franchise. "Remember that the new team probably won't be a good team. We *were* good, a team that was on its way, a team of basically good guys who stayed together. I wish them good luck back there, but it hurts a little."

As a further irony, Shinn, whose very name had become an expletive around Charlotte, is on the NBA's relocation committee, which is looking into the viability of expansion. (Insiders say that the ownership group with the best chance of landing an expansion franchise in Charlotte includes Larry Bird.) "I still love that city," says Shinn, who owns 65% of the Hornets. "I still feel the community can support an NBA team. I'm not going to be vindictive or bitter."

Privately, though, Shinn must wonder whether in four or five years the new owners in Charlotte—with a new arena that voters refused to build for Shinn—might have a more successful franchise than his own in New Orleans. Though the Hornets' early reviews in N'Awlins have been good, the team got a dose of reality last Saturday night when it hosted the Miami Heat. The pregame block party outside the arena had little of the Mardi Gras feel of opening night, and a less-than-capacity crowd of 15,419 witnessed the Hornets' 100–95 victory. Though Gene Hackman and Dustin Hoffman were seated courtside (they're in town making a movie), neither of the team's most celebrated season-ticket holders—vampire savant Anne Rice and pork-fat proselytizer Emeril Lagasse—was in the house. Methodist minister Connie Saizon delivered a toned-down pregame invocation (a custom Shinn plans to continue) and urged the crowd to "assume an attitude of prayer," which it did for the entire game, excepting a few raucous minutes in the fourth quarter.

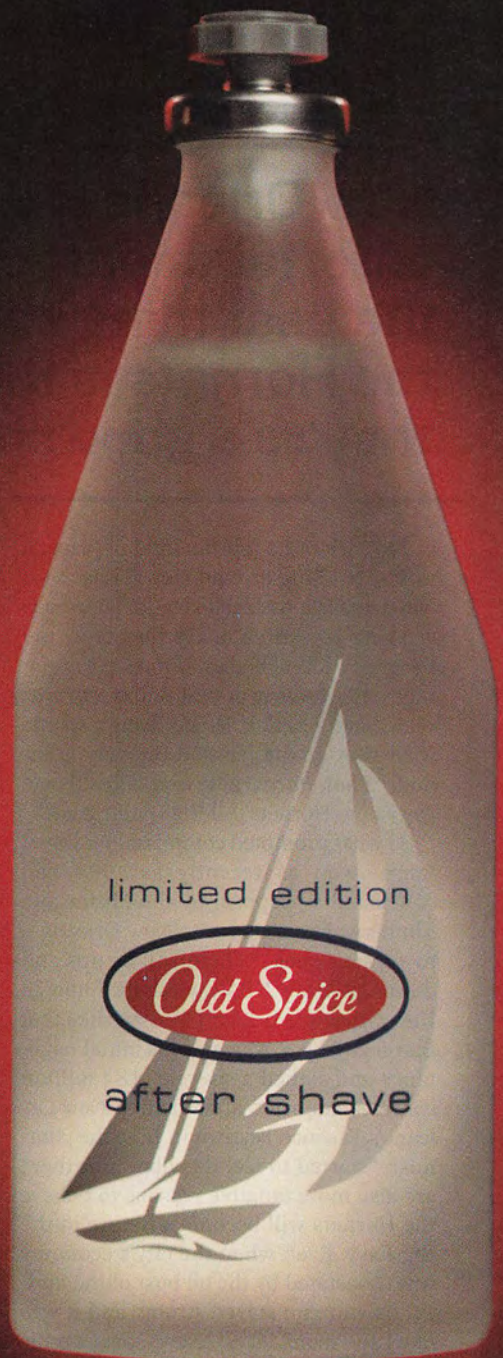
But what was to be expected? The Heat is a bad draw, New Orleans had lost 84–79 in Chicago the previous night, and the Crescent City's more established entertainment options beckoned: gorging on oysters and gumbo at Commander's Palace or blackened beef at K-Paul's; following the Emeril acolytes to either of his French Quarter eateries; standing at the corner of First and Chestnut in the Garden District with the hope that Ms. Rice would emerge from her spooky mansion and duck into the black limo (license plate OPHANIM) that's usually parked out front; strolling down Bourbon Street and observing projectile vomiting at its best; haunting the clubs and hoping that Fats Domino or Dr. John or Irma Thomas or one of the Marsalises, native sons all, would stop in to jam. What, you're going to pass up a visit to a joint called the Funky Butt in order to watch the Heat's Vladimir Stepania battle Jamaal Magloire?

"You find out quickly that this is very

IN THE STARS Neville belted out the inaugural anthem, while Hackman (above, left) and Hoffman took in the Heat game.

"There are so many things to do here that **people don't commit**," Martins says.

BILL HABERAP (FAR LEFT); DAVID E. KLUTHO



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much a last-minute town," says Alex Martins, the Hornets' vice president of marketing. "There are so many things to do that people don't want to commit. The challenge is to make them commit to you." Even for their opener the Hornets had to sell 2,000 tickets in the final two days to reach capacity.

DAVID E. KLUTHO

4 OFF THE FLOOR Wesley kept the pressure on the Heat and kept the Hornets unbeaten in their new arena.

Other factors might also help make the Hornets po' boys in their new home. With 658,830 TV households in the metropolitan area, New Orleans is the NBA's second-smallest market. (Only Memphis, with 653,840 households, is smaller.) The Big Easy has only one Fortune 500 company (Entergy) and a relatively small middle class—pro sports' classic target audiences. "Most people would look at the demographics on paper," says Martins, "and conclude that it's a borderline market for an NBA franchise." Though the city has supported the NFL's Saints, who have had only six winning seasons since their inception in 1967, it's not a rah-rah kind of place. A visitor strolling around New Orleans for two hours last week failed to find one body wearing one stitch of Hornets teal, and there were lots of bodies. "I think we're getting some T-shirts of that Baron guy next week," said a clerk at Home Team, a sportswear shop in the Jackson Brewery minimall. *That Baron guy* would be Baron Davis, the Hornets' All-Star point guard.

New Orleans is an entertainment town; the best thing about the Hornets is that they're a good show.

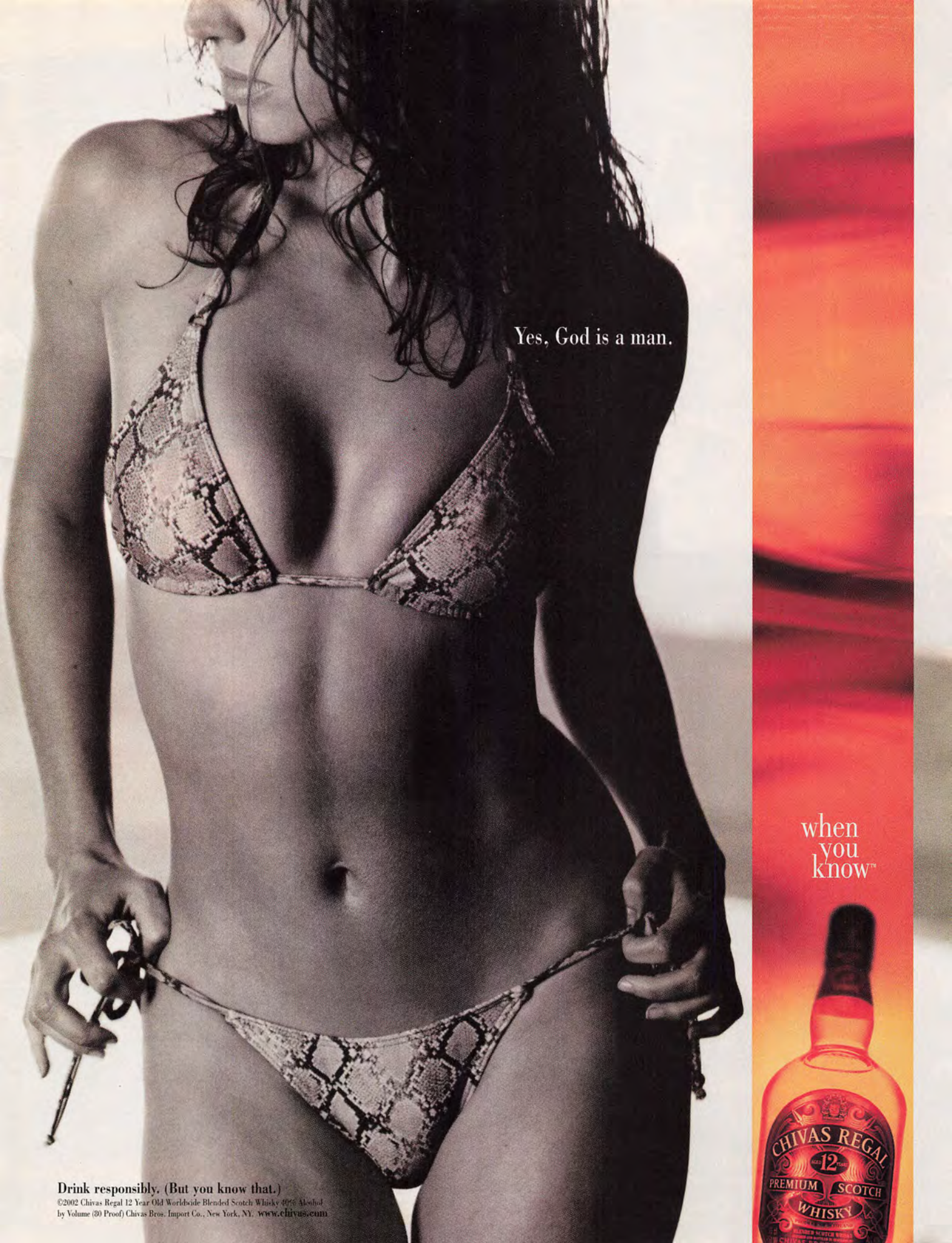
So what prompted commissioner David Stern—who as recently as 1994 had squelched a proposal by the Minnesota Timberwolves to move to New Orleans—to say last week, "There will be ups and downs, as in any NBA city, but the future in New Orleans is bright"? Perhaps like that Baron guy, who overcame his initial reluctance and signed a six-year, $84 million contract extension after visiting New Orleans's Essence Festival in July, the commish "started to feel the vibe." But there are also more tangible reasons to believe the Hornets will become a fixture in the Big Easy. Even when the city's economy was devastated by the oil bust of the mid-1980s, tourism stayed strong, and it was hotel and motel taxes—New Orleans trails only New York City and Las Vegas as a convention destination—that built New Orleans Arena on spec. "If we wanted to get an NBA team, we knew we couldn't put the chicken before the egg," says Morial, "so we threw deep on the arena." The metaphor is mixed, but the message is clear: New Orleans wanted a team and stuck out its figurative neck to get one.

The $110 million arena, which opened in October 1999 and is located in the shadow of the Superdome, has undergone $15 million in renovations since January, when Shinn and co-owner Ray Wooldridge, after some foreplay with Anaheim, Louisville, Norfolk and St. Louis, announced that they wanted to walk down the aisle with New Orleans. Locker rooms, lounges and lighting were upgraded. Fifty luxury suites were added to the existing six, and 49 of those have been sold. Teams are squeamish about releasing season-ticket figures (unless they're above 10,000), but Hornets sources say that about 8,500 have been sold in New Orleans. That's a solid number. Then there's the history of pro basketball in N'Awlins, which isn't as bad as many people assume. "We had a hard-core group of 8,000 to 10,000 fans," says Rich Kelley, who was a center for four of the Jazz's five seasons in New Orleans, during which the team went 161–249. "And remember, we weren't very good, and it was during a time when the NBA as a whole wasn't doing well." Then Jazz owner Sam Battistone moved the team, mainly because he couldn't negotiate a good lease agreement at the Superdome and because he had business interests in Salt Lake City.

Some sportswear clerks notwithstanding, New Orleanians know the game and know the players. "People here recognize you in your car," says Wesley. "They usually shout something like, 'Hey, glad you're here!' " That must feel nice, especially after toiling in a virtual mausoleum for the last two seasons. Hornets general manager Bob Bass appreciates the home fans' lusty booing of opponents during the first two games. "In Charlotte, I was getting damn tired of all that polite applause for the other team," he says.

Still, it would be a reach to call New Orleans a basketball town; it's an entertainment town, and in that light the best thing about the Hornets is that they're a good show. It remains to be seen, however, if they'll catch on in the so-called City That Care Forgot before a new team succeeds in the City That Forgot the Hornets. □

Read Jack McCallum's NBA Insider each week at **cnnsi.com/basketball.**



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RUSH HOUR At the Preble County derby it's shoulder-to-shoulder in the grandstand and often bumper-to-bumper down on the track.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID E. KLUTHO AND LYNN JOHNSON

CRASH COURSES

For nasty rivalries, earsplitting noise and bone-rattling collisions, nothing beats the mud-caked, low-staked, high-speed, steel-and-horsepower free-for-alls of demolition derby BY KEVIN CONLEY

HERE ARE the directions you'll need to find the best demolition derby drivers: "Go about four or five miles; there's a dairy farm and a church. Take a right. It's the first house after the stop sign. You'll see cars and a backhoe." And "Not to be mean or anything, but there's a junky house on the corner, and we're the second one after that." Or simply, "Go straight through town. If you cross the railroad tracks, you've gone too far. You'll know you're in the right place when you see all the cars." ¶ You drive on straight and flat two-lane highways between one-sign towns (Dadsville, Germantown, Gratis). The land on either side is green and open, the miles of soybeans, sod farms and corn interrupted by the occasional quarry or salvage yard or state reformatory for women. Wherever you're going, you've probably still got a ways to go. Everything in this part of the world seems to be an hour and 10 minutes from everything else—or, as the old-timers say, "a 12-pack away." ¶ But let's face it. You can think only so long about

soybeans. The road's empty. You floor it.

You're not the first. The pavement in front of many farm turnoffs is tattooed with black snakes: 40-yard-long side-by-side ess patches of barely controlled acceleration off a dead stop, or burnouts. The city may be full of cars, but it's the country that's full of drivers, and these marks on the road are signs of practice sessions off to a rip-roaring start. The marks say "bye, Ma" and "beware" and "arrest me" all at once. One driver—O.K., *the* driver, Scott (Ziz) Zizelman of Celina, Ohio, the 1999 DENT (Demolition Events National Tour) champion—says that as a young man he used to put on a new set of tires just to bald them, completely wearing out the treads in a few hours of tricks and burnouts on a Friday night.

"We used to take cars out and Baja [off-road wildly] through the fields," Ziz says. Or he'd do doughnuts, five or six of them in a row, in the middle of an intersection. Or—and this is where he and his gang separate themselves from the mere race-car enthusiasts he calls roundee-rounders—"we drove into bridge abutments," he says, "just to see what would happen."

This smash-it-yourself brand of intellectual curiosity is the mark of a demolition derby driver and the sure sign of an Ohio driver in particular. Out here they fix it so cars improve with contact—so a couple of good hits at the start of a derby help wad up the car's rear end to fully weaponize it. "Ohio county fairs, especially in the southwest or mid-central region, they're your hammer shows," says Todd Dubé, the president of DENT. Dubé knows Buckeyes: 60% of the starters at this year's national championship, and four of the top five (including first, second and third), were Ohio drivers. As Zizelman puts it, "This whole area is pretty derby-warped."

EXTENDED CHILDHOOD Kids in central Ohio develop a taste for the wheel early, and as adults they still play in the mud.

Smashing the family car is wholesome entertainment out here, and the demolition derby is always a county fair's hottest ticket, outselling other events such as tractor pulls, monster-truck shows and even Garth Brooks concerts. Of course, smashing the family car is even more entertaining when there's family in it. Jeff Clark Jr., who edged Zizelman to become this year's DENT champion, says the day his mom beat him at the Morrow County Fair was the proudest moment of his derbying career: "I asked Dad before I went into the feature, 'How do I beat Mom?' And he said, 'Well, hit her as fast as you can in the ass with your front end.' So it came down to three cars, and there was a fire, and I was clear down at one end, and she was clear at the other. So I hit her as fast as I could go."

Jeff Sr., winner of more than 100 county-fair features before he lost his leg in a truck accident, smiles at the memory. "It just pissed her off," he says.

"It didn't put a dent in her wagon," says Jeff Jr., who's known as Fatty, putting an arm around his mother, Alice. "And man, she just let me have it after that. Everybody throws it in my face that my mom beat me. But I don't care. The crowd loved it."

THE INSPECTION

UNION COUNTY FAIR, MARYSVILLE

Derby driving rules are pretty simple: no driver's-door hits; a minimum of one hit per minute required of every car; last car running wins. But before you get to drive, your car has to pass inspection, and that's not so simple. Old-timers talk fondly of the days when all you had to do was kick out the windows and go. "Back when I started," Jeff Clark Sr. says, "if I bought a car for 15 bucks and it ran, we derbied it. That's when derbies was derbies." But later in the conversation he gives a sneaky, smoky, profane little laugh that tells a different story. "You do half the s--- we did then *now*," he says, "and you'd end up in jail."

That is why, on the day of the show, a brain trust of derby mechanics gathers on the infield lawn to look over, and under, the cars. Mostly the inspectors perform safety checks: Doors must be wired shut so drivers don't fly out; holes must be cut into the hood so the fire crew can put out engine fires; and so on. But whenever a trophy-level driver checks in with a well-built car, the inspection crew—all veteran drivers with their own mechanical secrets—gets excited. As one inspector says, "It takes a cheater to know a cheater."

Exhibit A: Tony Long, a second-generation derbier, drives up in a suspiciously high-riding 1973 Lincoln. With Gary Hart bravado, he dares the crew to find something: "You can look all you want. Cut it in half. It's as legal as can be."

When the inspectors find something, Long drives away with a snarl of his 350 Chevy small-block engine, returning to his flatbed trailer to jiffy-fix his car. Tim Clark, Jeff Jr.'s uncle and the chief judge for this derby, seems unconcerned. "He'll cool down," Clark says. "But when I seen it sit so high with those factory springs in it, I knew it had to be welded someplace."

Hidden welds are to derbying what loaded gloves are to boxing: They make a normal hit harder than it has any right to be. But checking boxing gloves is easy. Checking for extra iron in a Nixon-era land yacht out of Detroit—all those old Impalas, Caddies, Caprice Classics and Malibu wagons—is like finding a needle in a junkyard. It takes somebody who knows the latest hiding places, which is why this week's inspector often is next week's opponent. Does this add an intriguing element of se-

crecy, conflict and disinformation to the derby circuit? You bet. It's like the cold war all over again, with louder motors.

Still, not every jalopy gets the Checkpoint Charlie treatment. Besides the powerful cars, there's a parade of colorful rust buckets with no hope of surviving their heats. One driver spends the entire inspection period spitting tobacco juice straight through his rotted floorboards onto the grass.

The paint jobs are not quite showroom. One guy has painted KILL where his speedometer used to be; another, JESUS on his door handle. The names of loved ones are painted everywhere: DEB, JIMMY, CHRIS, ELMER. And all cars must have large identifying numbers; 69 is a popular choice.

simplest terms. "I want him to see his kids," the inspector says.

"They ain't here," the wife says.

"No, I mean I want him to see his kids tomorrow."

"Oh, well," the woman says as she walks away, "he's well insured."

Pretty soon, Shawn Allen drives up in a '74 Electra 225, number 4667 (his birthday). Allen teaches phys ed, but during summer vacations he dedicates himself to derbying, spending a lot of time in the shop whipping his rust-free collection of see-America-first cars ('74 Custom Cruiser out of Georgia, '76 Cutlass from Tennessee, '75 Impala out of New Mexico and so on) into tip-top demolition-derby shape.

In his garage the day before the Union County Fair derby, Allen pointed out a few

flatbed, he says contentedly, "If they don't send me back, they think they haven't done their job. It makes them feel good."

Out on the derby field, steam billows from broken radiators, and rooster tails of mud shoot in every direction; axles bust and drivetrains snap; wagons crumple, engines seize, tires wobble on busted ball joints, and one Pontiac climbs the four-foot mud wall and hangs there; rims hit and sparks fly; mad-dog drivers take full-track shots for no reason other than a love of impact and a taste for the grandstand roar. Amazingly, through all the blindsiding and rear-ending and T-boning and head-on hits by 46 drivers, through three heats, a consolation and the feature event, everything goes exactly according to Allen's plan. After the first few hits, his rear end

"I asked Dad before the feature, 'How do I beat Mom?' And he said, 'Hit her as fast as you can in the ass with your front end.' "

To the entries with no chance—the first-timers and "beaters" that every derby needs—the inspectors speak in a gentle death-row chaplain's tone. As one overmatched car putts up to inspection with a woman walking beside it, the inspector asks the driver, "This your wife's car?"

"The wife don't have a car no more," he answers.

"He ran mine last weekend," she says.

The driver hasn't wired his doors shut. The inspector explains the necessity of this safety precaution, first to the husband and again to his wife. He tries to put it in the

of his secrets. For instance, his rear bumper sat at the regulation 22 inches off the ground, but he'd fixed it so that after a couple of hits the whole back end, with its three-quarter-ton-truck suspension, would spring up. Once the derby got rolling, he'd be ramming the sheet metal on other cars instead of trading blows on their bumpers. He also predicted that the inspectors would find something they *wanted* him to change. He hinted that it would be what he wanted them to find. Sure enough, after a few minutes of lying on the grass poking around underneath Allen's Buick, one judge says, "All right, Shawn, come here."

"Aw, Lordy, here we go," Allen cries with as much acting skill as you're likely to see in a gym teacher. Moments later, at his

does, in fact, spring up, and whenever he drives backward (the forward of derbies everywhere) his car turns into a battering ram. You can hear the roar of his motor over all the others to the very end, when number 4667, the last car running (with its $1,200 drivetrain, $2,000 engine and $300 drag-race axles), doesn't look all that different from how it looked at the start. It's not about the money: Allen wins $540 for his trouble. Nobody makes money at the demolition derby.

BEATING THE HIT MEN

PREBLE COUNTY FAIR, EATON

"This fairground is vital to the community," Marty Bresher explains as she drives past the swine barn in her golf cart. Bresher—

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the sort of big, loud older woman who encourages grown men to call her Mom—is a tireless fair booster. She introduces one official who rattles off the fairground's year-round schedule: "We got hog sales, cattle sales, weddin's," he says. "We have the antique tractor show, and after that there's the pork festival."

It's the day before the derby, when the 4-H shows end and the little kids have to sell their prizewinning hand-raised pigs, cows and sheep. "It's the saddest day of the fair," Bresher says. "There's always a lot of tears." But she can't stay downbeat for long. "Animalwise," she says, "this is really quite a big fair."

Demolitionwise too. At Preble, in 1999, some 200 cars ran in 12 heats, and the feature didn't finish until after 3 a.m. Recent turnouts have been smaller because, frankly, Ohio is running out of derby cars, but Bresher expects well over 100 entries this year, with heats for full-sized and compact cars, and a "powder-puff" heat for women.

The Preble County Fair is known for big derbies and hard, heavily welded cars. It's also notorious for its derby teams: the gangs of red, black or yellow cars that take out strangers first and then start on each other. "A lot of people don't want to come up here because they know they'll get teamed up on and destroyed," the chief derby inspector, Joe Deaton, says. "It's a county-pride thing."

Although Preble's posted rules clearly state NO TEAMING, Deaton ticks off the lineup: In red there's PCHM (Preble County Hit Men); in yellow, BRMD (Boys Race Men Derby); and in black, TBMF (Totally Bad, well, MFs). The most successful team, PCHM, began when Mark Hibberd and Paul Petro recruited people to run red with them. The tactic worked: Hibberd won the Preble derby six years straight before giving it up.

Here's the problem: Successful teaming makes for boring derbies. In the early '90s PCHM drivers used to eliminate everybody else, then shut off their engines in order of team seniority, splitting the prize money and saving their cars. Derby fans hate that. Preble needed a reckless glory-above-all derby savior to take on the Hit Men. What it got was Shannon Pugh, a tall, sad-eyed semi trailer mechanic who sees red, then hits it. "I started nailing them from the get-go," he says, "and people realized they weren't as tough as they thought they were."

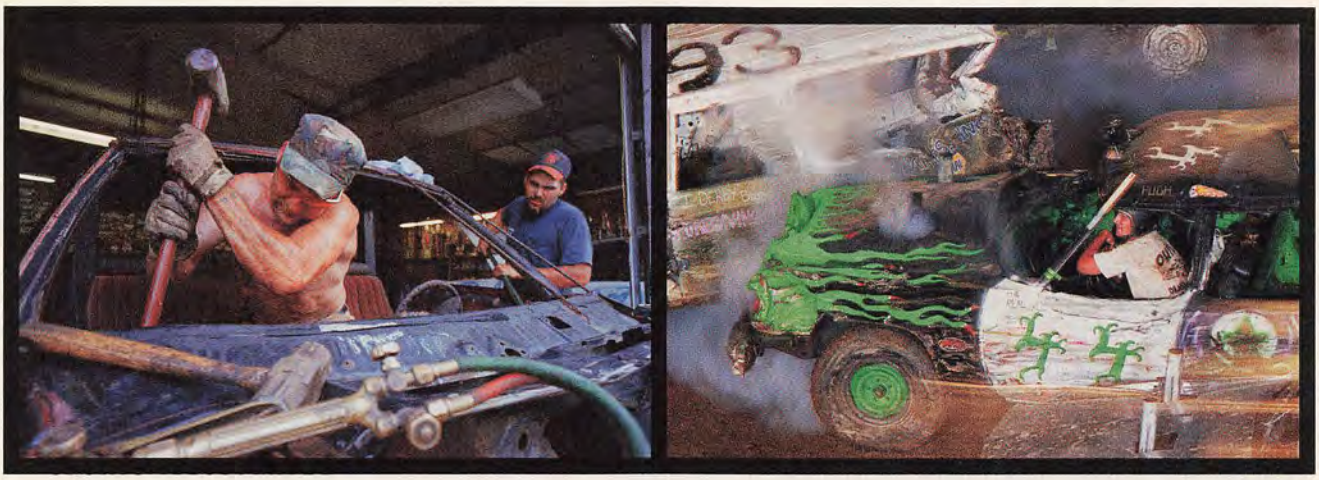
Pugh is many things: the child of a split family, a dog lover and wrestling fan, a habitual loser of friends, and a fiercely devoted uncle who says he'd "go to jail over my nephews." One-on-one, he can be achingly confessional, but out in public he seems eager to have others think he's crazy. As Jason Whisman, his former best friend and current No. 1 enemy, says, "He's got a charisma that it's like total chaos when he shows up."

On the day of the derby Pugh shows up early. His pickup truck says PSYCHOTIC across the windshield, and the '74 Impala wagon on his trailer is painted with tombstones bearing the derby numbers of enemy drivers. Inspectors okay the car, and Pugh takes his heat assignment and heads over to the lineup. The lines grow in the afternoon heat—the Dayton weather bureau has issued a heat emergency—but the drivers, worried about somebody sabotaging their engines, stay pinned to their vehicles, checking out the competition and forming on-the-spot alliances. The sun bakes the drought-hardened track, making it much faster.

Just before the first heat, the Eaton Fire Department hoses down the track, a safety measure to cut the pace a little. As a result the heat, which is loaded with red cars, including Petro's, is sloshy and slow, like water ballet. By the end, the crowd is booing as four Hit Men gang up on a lonely, spunky sedan.

The second heat is faster, but the last four drivers, including Whisman, get penned by a line of wreckage into one side of the derby field. They circle each other in tight quarters in a complicated choreography of feints and doughnuts and sudden braking that give away exactly who made alliances with whom. The third heat, Pugh's, looks more like rugby, full of scrums, with cars bashing together and then bulling through the pileup, followed by long end-to-end runs and full-track

Out here they fix it so cars improve with contact—so a couple of good hits help wad up the rear end to fully weaponize it.



PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE Caring for your derby machine often means bashing it into shape to bash other cars on the course.

hits. In the fourth heat, after some brave kamikaze shots from flimsy cars, the surviving drivers turn cautious, and the judges stop the competition to warn everybody about sandbagging, or intentionally avoiding contact to save the car. The most compelling sight during the fifth heat is a drunk who climbs a trackside cherry picker, then falls off right in front of a pair of state troopers.

Before the feature (the top four drivers in each heat qualify) Petro complains that the track hasn't been watered since the derby started. "The wetter the better," he says. "That way I can take my car someplace else afterward. If it stays like it is now, somebody's going to get hurt." Sure enough, as soon as the feature starts, Pugh slams Whisman—in the driver's door! Whisman's red running mates surround Pugh, smacking his car around in the corner, while Pugh's brother, Deron, takes over the feud with Whisman. The two drive their wagons to opposite ends, throw them in reverse and slam each other, dead center, wayback to wayback. Both drivers bounce like crash-test dummies.

Moments later Deron Pugh blacks out, and Deaton, the closest judge, stops the action. The emergency squad runs out with the Jaws of Life, but the men can't cut Deron free, because there's a hidden axle welded into his roof supports. During the long delay the drivers get out of their cars and curse the fast track conditions. Sensing rebellion, fair officials have the fire department water the track again. After the restart (without the Pughs—Deron leaves on a body board, Shannon under sheriff's escort after someone accused him of illegal welding and he threw a fit), the derby looks like ice hockey in penny loafers. The cars slip and slide rather than bang and bounce. Still, the result is familiar: In the end four Hit Men, including Petro and Whisman, are left to gang up on one car.

But this time the outnumbered driver is the savvy veteran Wes Monebrake, who teamed with the Pughs during the rough early going. Monebrake keeps slipping away, Jackie Chan–style, and the Hit Men slam into each other. The few times Monebrake gets caught in what Zizelman calls "the good old hold 'em and hit 'em," he waits it out and powers away.

One by one the Hit Men fall, till it comes down to Petro and Monebrake. Petro, on three wheels now and with his transmission smoking, knows his car is too beat-up to chance it in the open, where a fresher, faster Monebrake could waste his wagon in one shot. So he hides amid the wreckage, dodging Monebrake in a peek-aboo duel at parking-lot speed. It's a fascinating matchup of strategies: Monebrake, deprived of his speed, aims at Petro's wheels to break an axle, and Petro takes shots at Monebrake's midsection, hoping to disable the engine's electrical system. But after a long struggle Petro pays the price for his slowdown defense: His gas runs out.

As for the Pughs, both feel fine by the next morning. Three weeks later they drive in a Dayton derby. Shannon wins.

HOMETOWN DERBY WARS

MERCER COUNTY FAIR, CELINA

But first a beer break. And after you open that cold one, pop the hood of your car. (It would help if you could take out the engine too.) Now observe the many natural cup holders—not just on top of the fender but on the cowl of the wheel well, across that core support. Beer just goes with derbying. Not during the derby itself (no, that would be illegal), but just about any other time: during the wee-hours welding, the afternoon parts run, the weekend tuning. Sometimes you might even throw a couple of cases into your truck and just drive around town, seeing who's doing what to his derby car. People work all hours.

Derbying may be a poor man's sport, but it's not cheap. It takes time, and it can take you far from home in the company of beer.

Zizelman, a Budweiser man, sure does. "You see people's shops," he says, "and you know it's a poor man's sport." Pure bluster: Ziz's garage is a derby temple, with a herd of Chevy wagons from Georgia and Alabama, a cluster of trophies resting on a hood, a lending library of Chevy small-block engines along the wall, his Sunday derby car up on a hoist, and enough welding apparatus to build a small aircraft carrier. "That's pretty weird," he says with a grin. "I have the most welding equipment, and you're not allowed to weld."

READY TO ROLL It's all in the preparation, be it lining up to crash butt-first into a rival, or looking good after a practice run.

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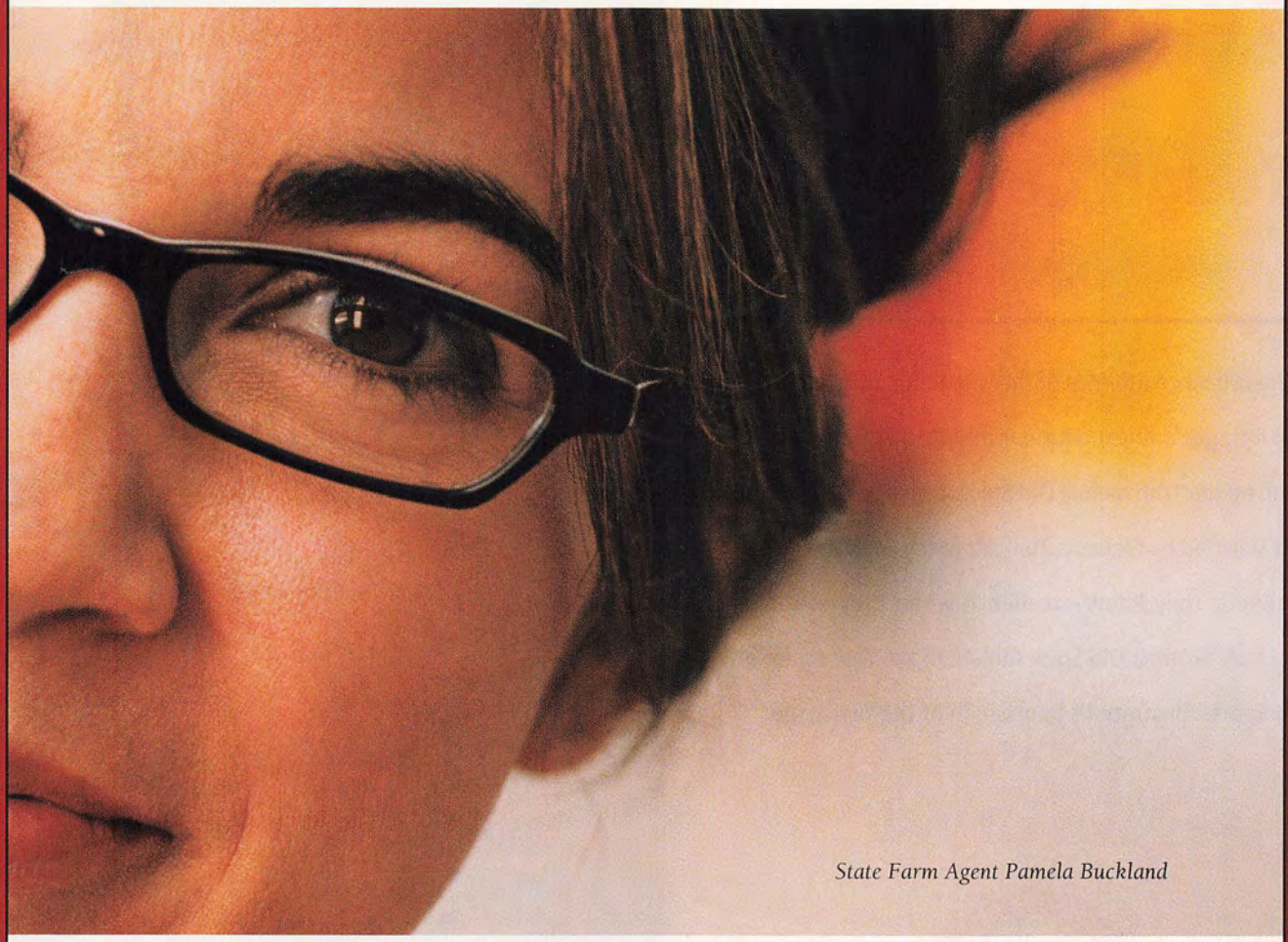

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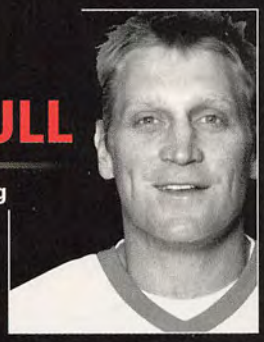

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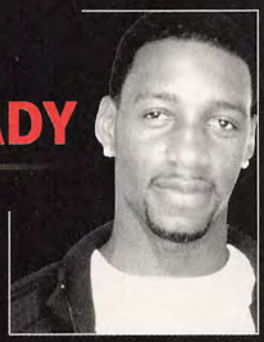

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ATHLETE OF THE YEAR
Old Spice

The 10th Annual Old Spice Athlete of the Year

Sports Illustrated's Sportsman of the Year Issue December 16, 2002

Ziz thrives on the gamesmanship in demolition derby. He's a big guy with a basso chuckle, full of bully bonhomie, and he admits that he "likes to stir up havoc." Even his friends seem wary in his presence. This can help: At Metal Mayhem, a stock derby in June, the other drivers were so busy worrying about Ziz that they didn't notice he lost his steering halfway through the feature. By calculating his caroms and protecting the middle of the track, Ziz managed to win the first-place $15,000 paycheck. That's high-impact bluffing.

Ziz's skill at mind games keeps people guessing in Celina, where the hometown derby is a year-round obsession. Couples watch derby tapes on double dates, and everybody seems to know whose dad built him a new shifter and who's driving with whose rear end. Speculating about what Ziz is up to is a favorite local pastime.

When Ziz hears that a reporter is going to visit his archrival and former buddy, Trent Braun, he mentions that he dated Trent's wife, Jeanelle, in high school. "Whoa, he brings *that* up," Trent says, laughing. "We weren't going to get into that." But when he hears that Ziz also claimed to have taught Jeanelle how to drive, Trent's mood turns ugly. Jeanelle says she has no idea what Ziz could be referring to.

Jeanelle drives in the Celina derby too. ("I actually won a derby when I was pregnant with Joey and we didn't know it," she says.) Unlike Zizelman, who derbies everywhere and builds a lot of cars, the Brauns run only in Celina. Trent builds two identical hard black wagons, number 13 for her, 31 for him. They make a cute couple, the sort that goes off-roading in the mud on their first date. The day before the derby they test their cars, doing doughnuts around each other in a dusty field. They look fearless and athletic and romantic, like ice dancers.

On derby night the Brauns and Ziz get through the heats and make the feature, as they have for years. Before the countdown Ziz and Trent take positions at opposite ends of the track. When the action starts, it's as if the two men are in their own private derby, and the other drivers steer clear of them. Ziz Bajas straight at Trent, bouncing full bore over the ripped-up derby field, and Trent honors their annual appointment, racing toward Ziz with no letup. A crash is inevitable, and everybody in Celina tunes in: This is choice gossip at road-rage speed. The two men hit, as they say in the sport, ass-end to ass-end, and the front wheels on both wagons leave the ground. Ziz gets the worst of it, but he backs up and hits Trent again—Ziz's car crumpling, in his opinion, way more than it should in a collision with a legal car. Moments later Ziz's drivetrain snaps, and he's through.

Braun goes on to win, but he seems troubled by the victory—and not because he and Jeanelle, who took third, just junked $2,500 worth of cars to win $1,450. "I got the fun took out of it," he says, looking weary and feeling sad about his lost friendship with Zizelman. "It's not worth it anymore. Tell you the truth, I had a lot more fun yesterday" doing doughnuts with Jeanelle and drinking beer with her and his derby buddies.

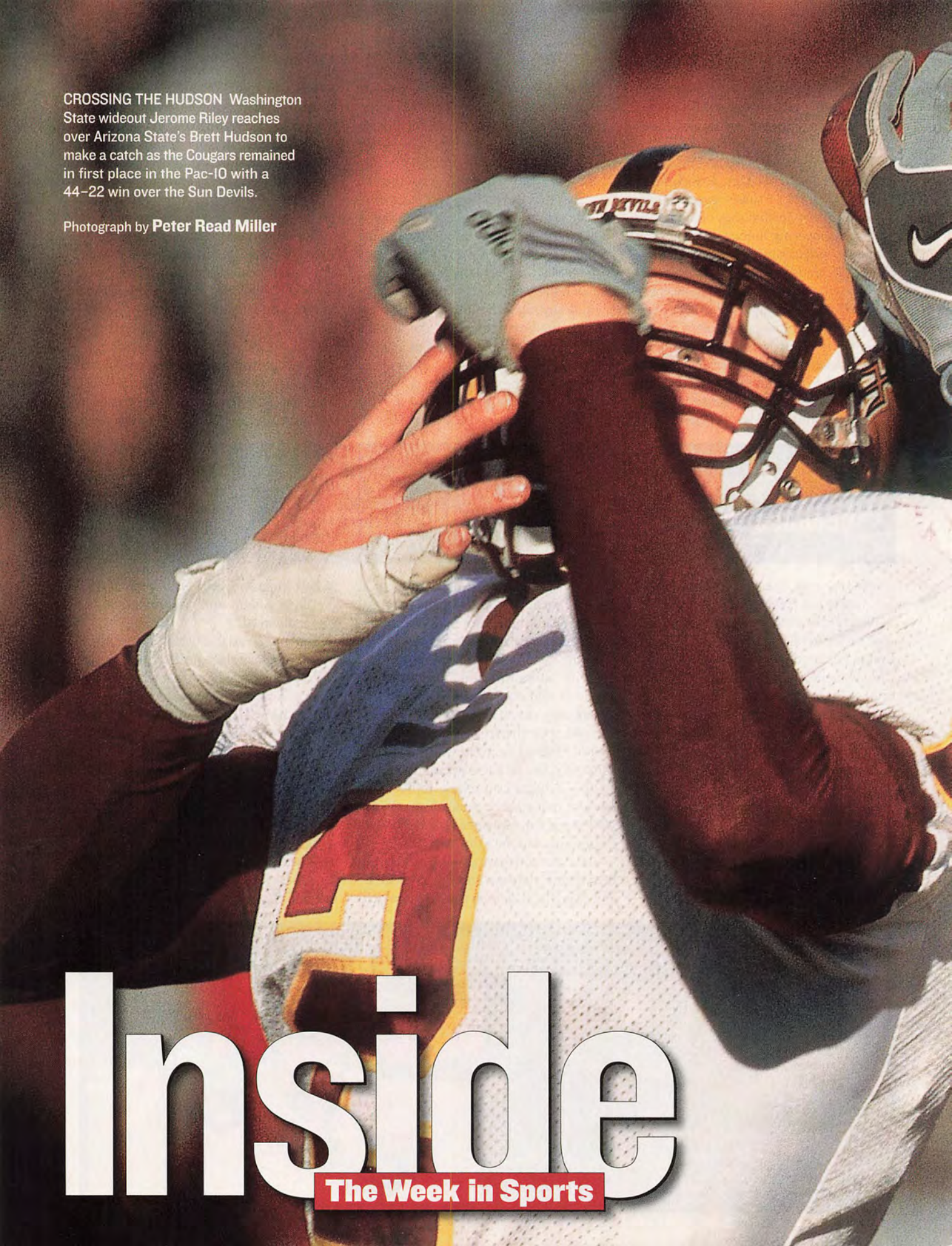
The Brauns are a tight derbying family: Their two boys add Tinkertoy wheels to cereal boxes and derby on the kitchen table; Jeanelle has bought Trent a truck radiator and a crash helmet for Christmas; and for their 10th wedding anniversary, the couple took their kids to the Wapakoneta derby.

But while derbying may be a poor man's sport, as Zizelman says, it's not cheap. It takes time, it frequently inspires obsession, and its pursuit can take you far from home in the company of beer. "You're either with these guys like I am," Jeanelle says, "or you're divorced."

After Trent wins the Mercer County derby, Jeanelle does not share her husband's tragic-hero routine. She knows that when friends come to visit, from now until the next county fair, she and Trent will stick this year's derby tapes in the video, and the thrill of victory will continue in their happy home. Her dad, who's been off work for a year with a pinched nerve, got a painkilling injection just to come see her derby. He's sitting in the stands, and she's ready to celebrate. With all the engines shut off, her holler is the loudest thing around. "I can't believe it!" she says as the salvage-yard tow trucks start to work. "I'm so proud of myself!" □

The emergency squad can't cut Deron free with the Jaws of Life, because there's a hidden axle welded into his roof supports.

WHEEL LIFE Crack-ups and breakdowns on the derby track don't stop kids from dreaming of their own driving exploits.



CROSSING THE HUDSON Washington State wideout Jerome Riley reaches over Arizona State's Brett Hudson to make a catch as the Cougars remained in first place in the Pac-10 with a 44–22 win over the Sun Devils.

Photograph by **Peter Read Miller**

Inside

The Week in Sports

College Football

After taking a backseat to quarterbacks last season, running backs are once again playing starring roles

The NHL

Speedy Wild off to a fast start • The Bruins' defense becomes offensive • Blues overcome goalie injuries

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Inside College Football

Johnson has gained 1,221 yards and become the Nittany Lions' biggest offensive star.

Back in Vogue

In a year of spread offenses, the running back has reemerged as the most important position on the field

by Ivan Maisel

LAST SEASON quarterbacks overshadowed running backs so much that for just the fourth time in the award's 67-year history, not a single tailback was named as one of the four Heisman Trophy finalists. With many prolific passers returning, pundits from coast to coast declared 2002 the Year of the Quarterback before a down was played. But with defenses putting more emphasis on stopping the passing game, running back has once again emerged as the most important position on the field.

It's no coincidence that the top three teams in the nation have Heisman candidates lining up behind their quarterbacks—senior Quentin Griffin of Oklahoma (950 yards, 6.7 per carry), sophomore Willis McGahee of Miami (1,034 yards, 16 touchdowns) and freshman Maurice Clarett of Ohio State (1,019 yards, 13 touchdowns despite missing nearly three games with shoulder and knee injuries). Eighth-ranked Virginia Tech is a national championship contender because it has two terrific running backs in senior Lee Suggs and sophomore Kevin Jones, who have combined to rush for 1,664 yards and 23 touchdowns. "If Virginia Tech's offensive line doesn't get the block," says Temple running backs coach Blair Thomas, "[Suggs and Jones] still have the stuff to go get it done themselves."

Thomas, who is one of only four tailbacks in Penn State history to gain 1,400 yards in a season, is about to be joined by a fifth. Nittany Lions senior Larry Johnson has outshone stellar sophomore quarterback Zack Mills, rushing for 1,221 yards and 11 touchdowns, including a school-record 279 yards in Penn State's 18–7 defeat of Illinois.

The resurgence of the running game is the result of teams' spreading out defenses by often going with three and four receivers. Unlike in recent years, many schools are using the run to set up the pass instead of the other way around. "There's a push to mix up your play calls," says N.C. State offensive coordinator Marty Galbraith, whose freshman tailback T.A. McLendon has opened passing lanes for quarterback Philip Rivers. "Defenses want you to be one-dimensional. A running back who can do lots of different things helps a great deal in throwing opponents off balance."

For those who live for the moment when a tailback bursts through the line into the open field, this season has been full of highlights. When the Heisman ceremony is held on Dec. 14, there's a good chance that running backs will outnumber quarterbacks. □

Head to Head

N.C. State tailback T.A. McLendon *versus* Maryland linebacker E.J. Henderson

At 5′ 11″ and 214 pounds, McLendon is a freshman in name only after rushing for 862 yards and 15 touchdowns. He will be tested against the 6′ 2″, 250-pound Henderson, the 2001 ACC defensive player of the year, who started the year slowly after having off-season back surgery but has lately spurred the Terrapins' defense. Since losing to Florida State 37–10 on Sept. 14, Maryland has allowed only 57 points in six games. Henderson, a senior, has made more solo tackles (74) than the number of total tackles (solo and assisted) by any teammate.

DAVID BERGMAN

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Speedy winger Gaborik, an emerging star, leads Minnesota with seven goals.

Neutral-Zone Rap

The slick-skating Wild is winning games and fans by defying the notion that a trapping team has to be dull

by Daniel G. Habib

TO HEAR players on the Wild tell it, one of the hottest teams in hockey is misunderstood. Minnesota's reputation as a bear-hugging, holding, bore-you-to-death trapping bunch is exaggerated. "People see that we trap, and they think we clutch and grab," says winger Andrew Brunette. "We're the furthest thing from that. We play a tight defensive game, we're positionally smart and our speed surprises teams."

If the Wild's speed surprises, its record shocks. Minnesota, which was 26-35-12-9 last season, had the best record in the Western Conference (8-2-2-0) through Sunday. The team's speed has made coach Jacques Lemaire's neutral-zone trap highly effective. By stocking its forward lines with shifty, fast (albeit smaller) skaters, the Wild is playing cagey defense, generating scoring chances off turnovers and capitalizing on its power play (18.7%, ninth in the league) to increase the team's scoring by almost a goal per game (to 3.3) from last year.

Although the hot starts of explosive 20-year-old winger Marian Gaborik (seven goals) and resurgent goalie Manny Fernandez (1.84 goals-against average) are the most obvious factors in Minnesota's rise, the happy marriage of skaters and system is the secret of its success. The Wild applies pressure with a 1-2-2 forecheck, which requires the forwards to skate smoothly and change directions rapidly to pressure the puck carrier and steer him to the perimeter of the neutral zone. But contrary to popular perception, Minnesota doesn't obstruct through the neutral zone. Instead, the Wild uses speed and positioning to disrupt the offensive rhythm.

Skating ability has been a primary consideration in G.M. Doug Risebrough's assembling of the third-year expansion team, whose $21 million payroll is the NHL's lowest. Forwards Bill Muckalt, Cliff Ronning and Sergei Zholtok, all acquired over the past two offseasons, are able skaters and responsible two-way players. They have jelled with Minnesota's young core under the tutelage of Lemaire, the league's best X's and O's coach. "Jacques made me into a checker when six years ago I couldn't check my coat," says journeyman center Wes Walz. "He can teach you so much about positioning."

Says Red Wings associate coach Barry Smith, "They play so well collectively. They don't go outside the system."

That success notwithstanding, Lemaire has been almost fatalistic in stressing the inevitability of a downturn—"Who knows where we'll end up, maybe in a ditch?" he mused after last Thursday's 2–1 overtime win over the Sharks—the better to tamp mounting expectations for an in-

Hall of Famer? Not a Hall of Famer?

C Guy Carbonneau *1980–81 through '99–00*
A scoring sensation as a junior, he transformed his game to become the best defensive forward of his era. His signature moment came in the '93 Stanley Cup finals when he shut down Wayne Gretzky to lead Montreal past L.A.

THE VOTE: *His numbers are light (260 goals and 663 points), but his impact wasn't. Put him in the Hall.*

DAVID E. KLUTHO (2)

experienced team with seven regulars 25 or younger. "When you have young guys who have spent four or five years with an organization, you get a solid foundation," he says. "Then, when you start to win, you'll be there every year. We're still missing that."

The Bruins' Blueliners

Offense from The Defense

Despite 11 stitches in his chin, Boston defenseman Bryan Berard stood in the home dressing room last Saturday night with a grin on his face. A nasty first-period high-stick couldn't bring down Berard, whose wrister from the left point struck the stick of New York winger Pavel Bure, squirted through traffic and went into the net with 38.8 seconds remaining to give the Bruins a 3–2 win.

Berard, who had three goals and five points through Sunday, is the centerpiece of the club's blue line makeover. After losing 41-goal winger Bill Guerin to free agency last summer, Boston attempted to fill the scoring void by getting its defensemen, who combined for just 18 of the team's 236 goals last season, to increase their production. Spots belonging to Kyle McLaren (who is sitting out because of a contract disagreement) and Jamie Rivers (released) went to Berard, a free-agent signee, and 22-year-old Jonathan Girard, promoted from the AHL. Second-year defenseman Nick Boynton has been given additional ice time, and all three have been urged to look for opportunities to join the rush as well as pepper the net with pucks.

"With Bryan, Nick and myself, they've brought in people who play aggressively," says Girard, "and we've also got others who work hard on their defense. The six defensemen work together as duos." Indeed, by placing an offensive-minded blueliner with a stay-at-home type on each pairing—Girard with Hal Gill, Boynton with Don Sweeney, Berard with Sean O'Donnell—Bruins coach Robbie Ftorek has gotten a scoring boost from his defensive corps (eight of the team's 37 goals), one reason the club was off to an unexpectedly good start, 7-2-2-0 at week's end.

For more news, notes and analysis from Daniel G. Habib, go to **cnnsi.com/hockey**.

Blues' Injured Goaltenders

The More the Merrier

After his club's meek second-round playoff loss to the Red Wings last May, Blues general manager Larry Pleau vowed to improve his team from within. He was able to do that until last week, when an unfathomable string of injuries to his goalies forced Pleau to get outside help.

During the preseason, No. 1 netminder Brent Johnson suffered a high left ankle sprain that will sideline him another three weeks. In the season's second week backup Fred Brathwaite and No. 3 Reinhard Divis suffered groin pulls. (Brathwaite returned on Oct. 26.) Fourth-stringer Curtis Sanford, called up from the club's AHL affiliate in Worcester, Mass., won his first start on Oct. 19 but strained his left Achilles tendon in his third game. That left the job to Cody Rudkowsky, who had been toiling for Trenton (N.J.) in the ECHL. Last week Pleau, desperate for someone with NHL experience, signed a sixth netminder, 37-year-old free agent Tom Barrasso, to a one-year, $900,000 contract.

Miraculously, St. Louis had equaled a franchise-best 8-1-1-0 start through Sunday and was in first place in the Central Division. Why? Those goalies had a combined 1.76 goals-against average—second best in the league. Says Pleau, "We've got no complaints." □

in the Crease

by Pierre McGuire

The Stars are frustrated by center **Pierre Turgeon**'s uninspired performance. Turgeon, who in his first season with Dallas last year had only 15 goals in 66 games, has been switched to a line with rugged center **Jason Arnott** in hopes that the move will reinvigorate the former 50-goal man. If Turgeon's play doesn't improve, don't be surprised if he's traded, even if the Stars have to eat much of the $26 million left on his contract. . . . Credit defenseman **Craig Rivet** for helping pull the Canadiens out of their early-season malaise. After Rivet blasted the team last week, saying the players weren't working hard enough in practice or in games, Montreal went unbeaten in its next three matches. Nobody can question Rivet's leadership, considering that he's playing with a severely sprained left wrist, the same one that was broken last season. . . . The Red Wings' European scout, **Hakan Andersson**, who always seems to come up with draft gems—he snagged **Pavel Datsyuk** at No. 171, **Henrik Zetterberg** at 210 and **Dmitri Bykov** at 258 in recent years—scored again in June. **Jiri Hudler**, whom Detroit selected 58th, is the second-leading scorer in the Czech Elite League, with 17 points in 17 games for Vsetin. The knock on Hudler was that at 5' 8" and 160 pounds, he was too small. . . . Speaking of the Red Wings, expect forward **Kirk Maltby**, who will be an unrestricted free agent this summer, to sign a four-year extension. His base salary will top out at $2.1 million in the final season of the new deal. . . . Many observers are calling 17-year-old defenseman **Ryan Suter**, the nephew of former NHL defenseman **Gary Suter**, the best player to come through the USA Hockey development program in five years. Ryan is eligible for the NHL draft next June.

Which Team Really Is This Good?

Penguins

Behind playmaking center Mario Lemieux (20 assists) and blossoming right wing Aleksey Morozov (seven goals), surprising Pittsburgh, which last season missed the playoffs and had only 69 points, was 7-2-2-0 through Sunday.

Lightning

Behind playmaking center Vincent Lecavalier (seven assists) and blossoming right wing Martin St. Louis (nine goals), surprising Tampa Bay, which last season missed the playoffs and had only 69 points, was 7-3-2-0 through Sunday.

THE VERDICT: Expect the Lightning, which has benefited from a soft schedule, to tail off. However, the Penguins have the talent to remain postseason-bound. —D.G.H.

COURTESY OF THE NHL (2)

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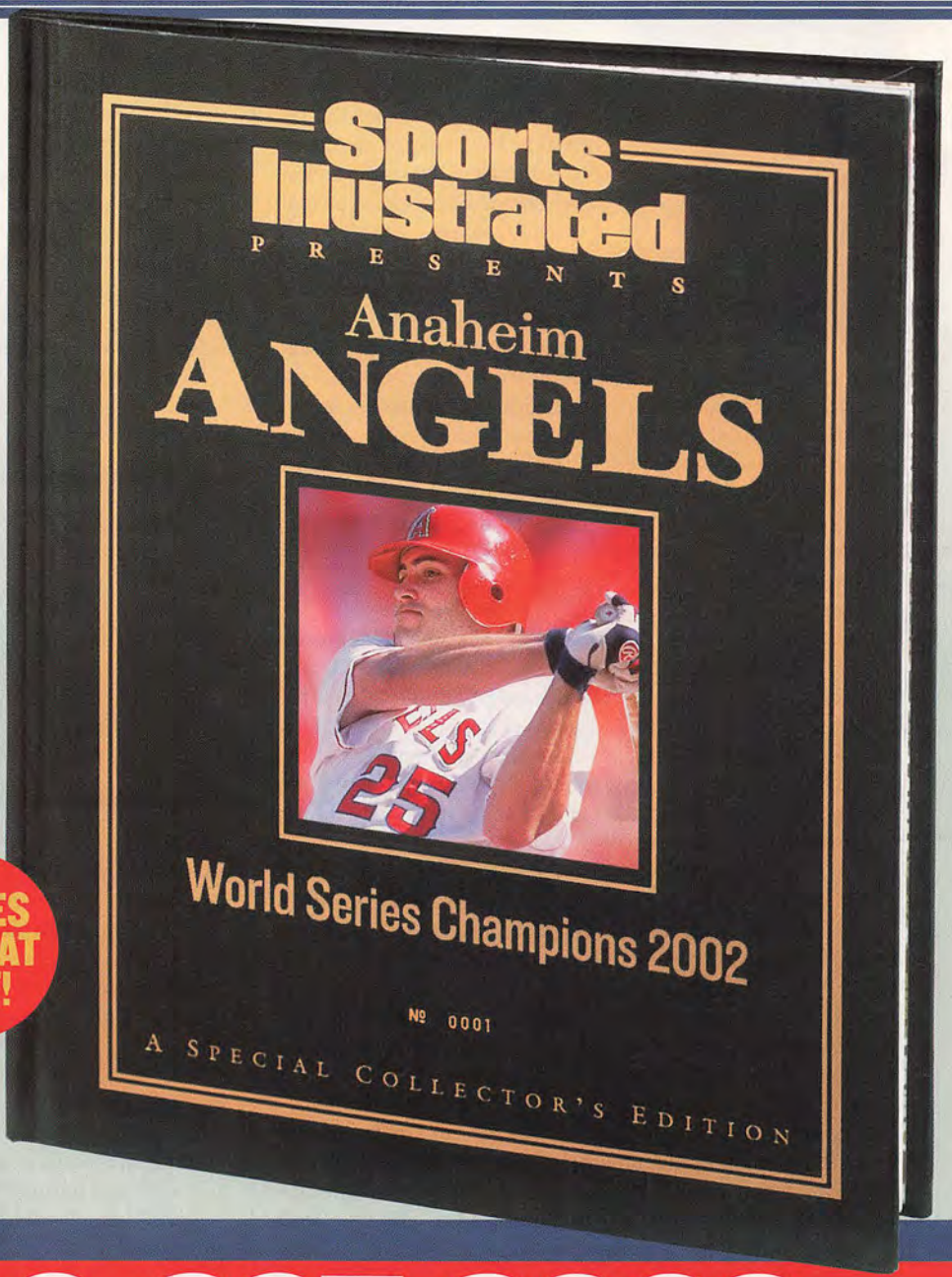

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Robbing Darren to Pay Paul

by Rick Reilly

AS AN American father I'm required by law to nap on the couch on Sundays. I was complying when something woke me up that I couldn't believe.

Oakland Raiders quarterback Rich Gannon was on the ground, writhing in pain, when New York Giants defensive end Michael Strahan took a flying leap onto Gannon's chest! And Gannon was out-of-bounds at the time! Then Strahan kicked him—and no flag!

Finally I realized it wasn't a live game on the TV. My 15-year-old son, Jake, was playing *NFL Blitz 2003*, a wildly popular video game with amazingly realistic graphics.

Now Gannon was being jumped on by *five* Giants. I winced.

"Jake," I scolded. "How can you *do* that?"

"You just press this little *X* button," he explained.

(Sigh.)

I picked up the game's box. It said this was an NFL approved and licensed product. The players are NFL stars, wear NFL uniforms and play in NFL stadiums. Jake said *NFL Blitz 2003* is his favorite game, partly *because* you can spear Brian Griese, kick Jerry Rice in the jewels and body-slam Marshall Faulk. And without even pressing a button you can watch NFL players taunt one another, preen after a first down, and stand over a player writhing in pain and point. "It's so realistic," Jake said.

That's true. In fact, the biggest difference that I could see is that in a real game, when Denver Broncos safety Kenoy Kennedy lays out a guy over the middle, the NFL fines Kennedy $42,794. In *NFL Blitz 2003* there's no flag, no fine, only more sales. Either way, the NFL gets the money!

When I explained to Jake that studies have shown that watching violence makes the viewer more violent, he said, "You mean like those?" and pointed to my shelf of videos. What, you don't have the three-volume set of *The NFL's Greatest Decapitations*?

Do you think it's hypocritical for the NFL to fine its players for violent hits, taunting and unnecessary roughness with one hand and cash in on the very same thing with the other? Dallas Cowboys safety Darren Woodson does. He was fined $75,000 last week for a helmet-to-helmet hit.

"Darren did bring that up with me, yes," says NFL discipline czar Gene Washington. "He said, 'You're fining me on one hand for something you promote with the other.' So, yes, from my side of things I'd like to see some consistency there."

Oops. Somebody's going to get a memo from Paul Tagliabue.

"It's marketing in 2002," says former New England Patriots receiver Darryl Stingley, who in 1978 was left a quadriplegic by a hit delivered by the Oakland Raiders' Jack (the Assassin) Tatum. "Guys I see playing today think they're *in* a video game. Everybody wants to make it onto a greatest-hits tape."

"It's like the celebrations," says Philadelphia Eagles safety Brian Dawkins, who last week got dinged $50,000 for a late hit. "They'll flag a guy for it, and then you'll see that same move in a video game the next year."

But the NFL doesn't fret about that. After team apparel, the league's second largest source of licensing income is video games like *Blitz*, in which players lay semiconscious after every hit and the announcers think it's hilarious. "That was criminal!" one of them says with glee.

> The NFL fines players for violent hits, then cashes in on the very same thing with licensed video games.

"Oh, what the heck," says his virtual partner, "he seems to be enjoying it!"

A Green Bay Packer does a front flip, landing with a two-handed punch on Ricky Williams's gut. "I'm not a psychologist," says the announcer, "but this guy needs one! He's out of control!"

And it's not just *Blitz*. *NFL 2K3*, another NFL-licensed video game, wallows in the violence too. You can set the game so that no penalties are called for roughing the passer, roughing the kicker, clipping and chop-blocking. Maybe next year: Leg whip your opponent getting off the team bus!

And it's not just football. The ghouls at Midway, which brought you *NFL Blitz 2003* and the soaked-in-blood *Mortal Kombat*, are now out with *NHL Hitz*, in which you can cream your opponent upside the head with your stick to win a face-off. Now that's family fun!

I turned back to the TV and watched some more. There was taunting and pummeling. There were late hits and cheap blindside shots and lots of other wholesale and unpenalized mayhem.

"Jake," I finally said. "This is too violent. Let's turn on the real game now."

"Uh, Dad," he said. "We *are* watching the real game." □

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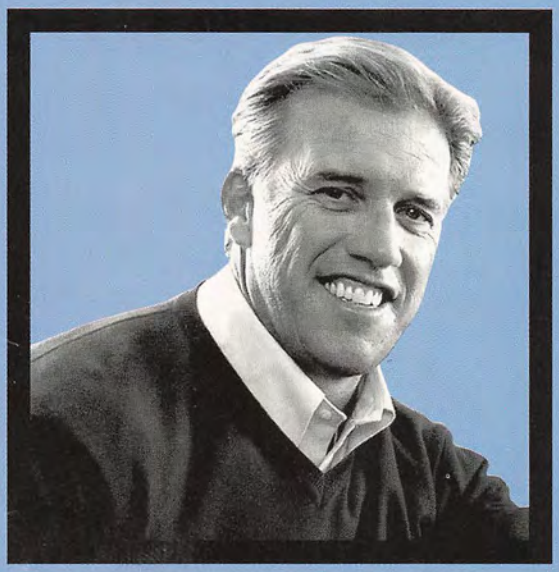

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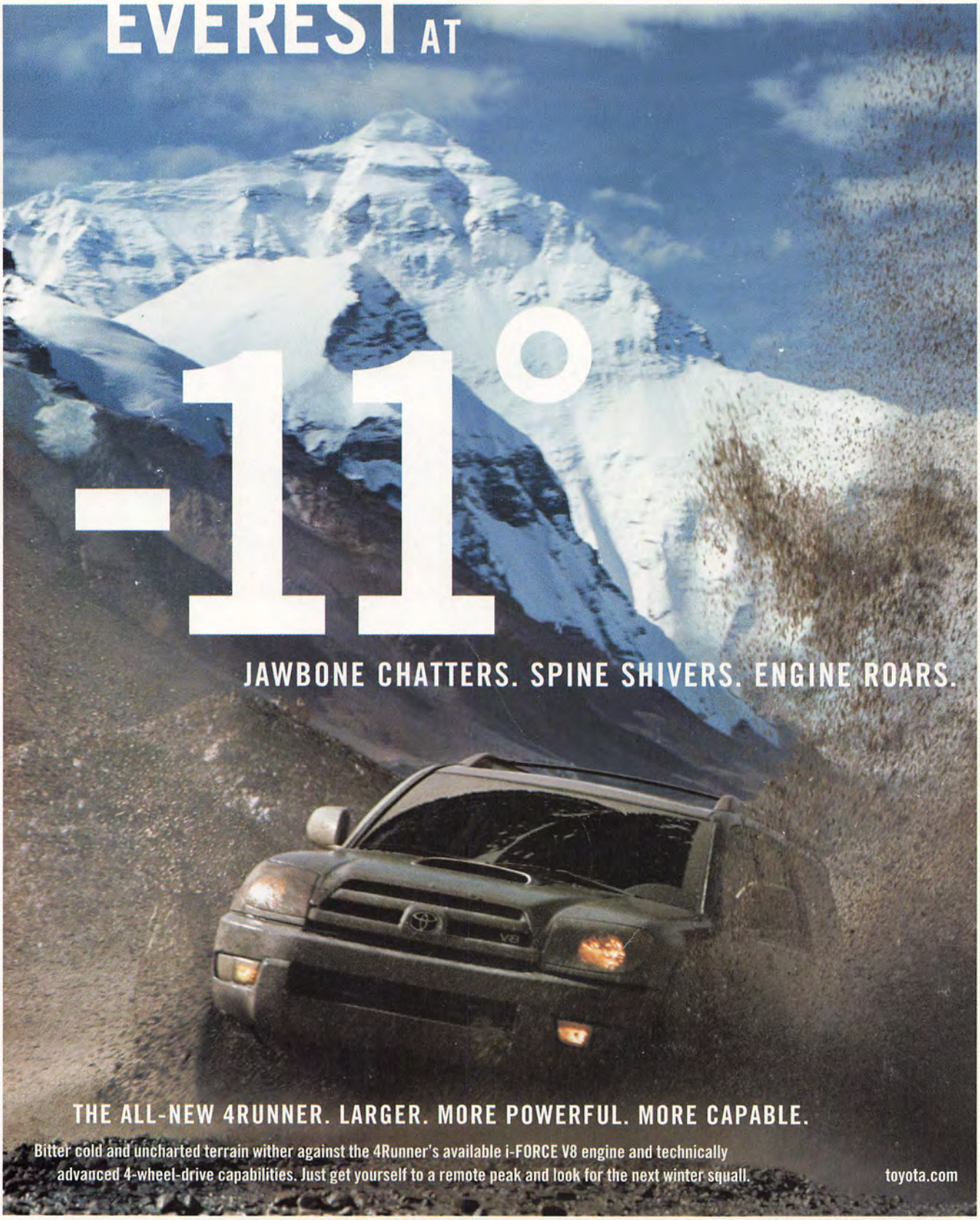
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